

THE
O D Y S S E Y

OF
HOMER,

TRANSLATED BY A. POPE.

A NEW EDITION.

ADORNED WITH PLATES.

VOLUME II.

London:

PRINTED FOR F. J. ROVERAY,

By T. Bensley, Bolt Court.

AND SOLD BY J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL, AND
E. LLOYD, HARLEY STREET.

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THE
FOURTH BOOK

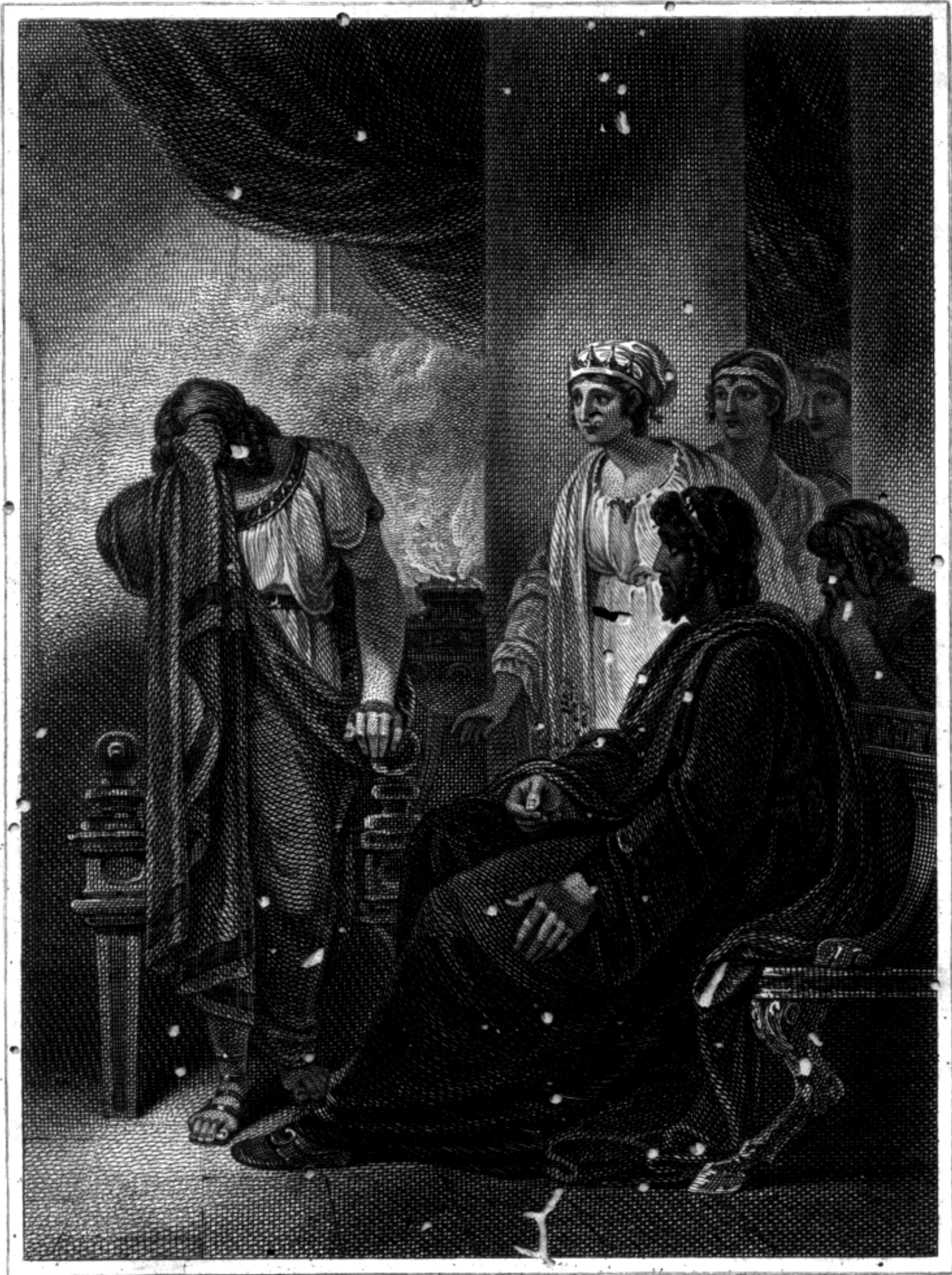
OF THE
ODYSSEY

THE ARGUMENT.

THE CONFERENCE WITH MENELAUS.

TELEMACHUS with Pisistratus arriving at Sparta, is hospitably received by Menelaus, to whom he relates the cause of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befell the Greeks since the destruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return, from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulysses is detained in the island of Calypso.

In the mean time the suitors consult to destroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprised of this, but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Iphima.



Painted by H. Singleton

Engraved by Ja. Neagle

BOOK IV.

AND now proud Sparta with their wheels resounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds:
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends;
Where sat Atrides' midst his bridal friends,
With double vows invoking Hymen's pow'r, 5
To bless his son's and daughter's nuptial hour.

That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd,
Hermione, the fairest of her kind,
Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the fatal doom of Troy: 10
With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.
Meanwhile at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.
Brave Megapenthes, from a stol'n amour 15
To great Atrides' age his handmaid bore:
To Helen's bed the gods alone assign.
Hermione, t' extend the regal line;
On whom a radiant pomp of graces wait,
Resembling Venus in attractive state. 20

While this gay friendly troop the king surround,
 With festival and mirth the roofs resound :
 A bard amid the joyous circle sings
 High airs, attemper'd to the vocal strings ;
 Whilst, warbling to the varied strain, advance 25
 Two sprightly youths to form the bounding dance.
 'Twas then, that issuing through the palace gate
 The splendid car roll'd slow in regal state :
 On the bright eminence young Nestor shone,
 And fast beside him great Ulysses' son. 30
 Grave Eteoneus saw the pomp appear,
 And speeding, thus address'd the royal ear :

Two youths approach, whose semblant features
 prove
 Their blood devolving from the source of Jove.
 Is due reception deign'd, or must they bend 35
 Their doubtful course to seek a distant friend ?

Insensate ! (with a sigh the king replies)
 Too long, misjudging, have I thought thee wise :
 But sure relentless folly steels thy breast,
 Obdurate to reject the stranger-guest ; 40
 To those dear hospitable rites a foe,
 Which in my wand'rings oft' reliev'd my woe :
 Fed by the bounty of another's board,
 Till pitying Jove my native realm restor'd—

Straight be the coursers from the car releast, 45
 Conduct the youths to grace the genial feast.

The seneschal rebuk'd in haste withdrew;
 With equal haste a menial train pursue: •
 Part led the coursers, from the car enlarg'd,
 Each to a crib with choicest grain surcharg'd; 50
 Part in a portico, profusely grac'd
 With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd;
 Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
 Who eye the dazzling roofs with vast delight,
 Resplendent as the blaze of summer-noon, 55
 Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
 From room to room their eager view they bend;
 Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, descend;
 Where a bright damsel-train attends the guests
 With liquid odours, and embroider'd vests. 60
 Refresh'd, they wait them to the bow'r of state,
 Where circled with his peers Atrides sat:
 Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
 The purest product of the crystal springs;
 High on a massy vase of silver mould, 65
 The burnish'd laver flames with solid gold:
 In solid gold the purple vintage flows,
 And on the board a second banquet rose.

When thus the king with hospitable port :
 Accept this welcome to the Spartan court; 70
 The waste of nature let the feast repair,
 Then your high lineage and your names declare :
 Say from what sceptred ancestry ye claim,
 Recorded eminent in deathless fame?
 For vulgar parents cannot stamp their race 75
 With signatures of such majestic grace.

Ceasing, benevolent, he straight assigns
 The royal portion of the choicest wines
 To each accepted friend : with grateful haste
 They share the honours of the rich repast. 80
 Suffic'd, soft-whisp'ring thus to Nestor's son,
 His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun :

View'st thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd most !
 These prodigies of art, and wond'rous cost ?
 Above, beneath, around the palace shines 85
 The sumless treasure of exhausted mines :
 The spoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
 And studded amber darts a golden ray :
 Such, and not nobler, in the realms above
 My wonder dictates is the dome of Jove.. 90

The monarch took the word, and grave replied :
 Presumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride

Of man who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
 Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely blest!
 With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd,
 Envy will own, the purchase dearly paid. • 96
 For eight slow-circling years by tempest tost,
 From Cyprus to the fair Phœnician coast,
 (Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
 Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile.
 Next Ethiopia's utmost bound explore, 101
 And the parch'd borders of th' Arabian shore:
 Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,
 O'er the warm Libyan wave to spread my sails:
 That happy clime! where each revolving year
 The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear, 106
 And two fair crescents of translucent horn
 The brows of all their young increase adorn;
 The shepherd swains with sure abundance blest,
 On the fat flock and rural dainties feast; 110
 Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
 But ev'ry season fills the foaming pail.
 Whilst heaping unwish'd wealth, I distant roam,
 The best of brothers, at his natal home,
 By the dire fury of a traitress wife, 115
 Ends the sad ev'ning of a stormy life:

Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
 These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd!
 My wars, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
 To you, your fathers have recorded long: 120
 How fav'ring heav'n repaid my glorious toils
 With a sack'd palace, and barbaric spoils.
 Oh! had the gods so large a boon denied,
 And life, the just equivalent, supplied
 To those brave warriors, who, with glory fir'd, 125
 Far from their country in my cause expir'd!
 Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
 Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
 I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
 Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear. 130
 But oh! Ulysses—deeper than the rest
 That sad idea wounds my anxious breast!
 My heart bleeds fresh with agonizing pain;
 The bowl, and tasteful viands tempt in vain,
 Nor sleep's soft pow'r can close my streaming eyes,
 When imag'd to my soul his sorrows rise. 136
 No peril in my cause he ceas'd to prove,
 His labours equall'd only by my love:
 And both alike to bitter fortune born,
 For him, to suffer, and for me to mourn! 140

Whether he wanders on some friendly coast,
 Or glides in Stygian gloom a pensive ghost,
 No fame reveals; but doubtful of his doom,
 His good old sire with sorrow to the tomb
 Declines his trembling steps; untimely care 145
 Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
 And the chaste partner of his bed and throne
 Wastes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.

While thus pathetic to the prince he spoke,
 From the brave youth the streaming passion broke:
 Studious to veil the grief, in vain repress, 151
 His face he shrouded with his purple vest.
 The conscious monarch pierc'd the coy disguise,
 And view'd his filial love with vast surprise:
 Dubious to press the tender theme, or wait 155
 To hear the youth inquire his father's fate.

In this suspense bright Helen grac'd the room;
 Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume:
 So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
 The silver-shafted goddess of the chace! 160
 The seat of majesty Adraste brings,
 With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings.
 To spread the pall (beneath the regal chair)
 Of softest woof, is bright Alcippe's care.

A silver canister divinely wrought, 165

In her soft hands the beauteous' Phylo brought:

To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase

Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:

For Polybus her lord (whose sov'reign sway

The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey), 170

When to that court Atrides came, 'carest

With ~~ast~~ munificence th' imperial guest;

Two lavers from the richest ore refin'd,

With silver tripods, the kind host assign'd;

And, bounteous, from the royal treasure told 175

Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.

Alcandra, consort of his high-command,

A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand;

And that rich vase, with living sculpture wrought,

Which 'heap'd with wool the beauteous Phylo

brought: 180

The silken fleece impurpl'd for the loom;

Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.

The sov'reign seat then Jove-born Helen press'd,

And pleasing thus her sceptred lord address'd:

Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair,
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare?

Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontroll'd

Hear me the bodings of my breast unfold.

With wonder wrapt, on yonder cheek I trace
 The feature of the Ulyssean race : 190
 Diffus'd o'er each resembling line appear,
 In just similitude, the grace and air
 Of young Telemachus, the lovely boy,
 Who bless'd Ulysses with a father's joy,
 What time the Greeks combin'd their social arms,
 T' avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms! 196

Just is thy thought, the king assenting cries,
 Methinks Ulysses strikes my wond'ring eyes:
 Full shines the father in the filial frame, 199
 His port, his features, and his shape the same:
 Such quick regards his sparkling eyes bestow;
 Such wavy ringlets o'er his shoulders flow!
 And when he heard the long disast'rous store
 Of cares, which in my cause Ulysses bore,
 Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes, 205
 Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose:
 Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
 His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.

See there confess'd, Pisistratus replies,
 The genuine worth of Ithacus the wise! 210
 Of that heroic sire the youth is sprung,
 But modest awe hath chain'd his tim'rous tongue.

Thy voice, O king! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a god rever'd.

With him at Nestor's high command I came, 215
Whose age I honour with a parent's name.

By adverse destiny constrain'd to sue
For counsel and redress, he sues to you.

Whatever ill the friendless orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years, 220
Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain,
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain:

Affianc'd in your friendly pow'r alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.

Is Sparta bless'd, and these desiring eyes 225
View my friend's son? (the king exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whose sword was sacred to the man he lov'd:
Mirror of constant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd!—
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd,
No Greek an equal space had e'er possest, 231
Of dear affection, in my grateful breast.

I, to confirm the mutual joys we shar'd,
For his abode a capital prepar'd;
Argos the seat of sov'reign rule I chose; 235
Fair in the plan the future palace rose,

Where my Ulysses and his race might reign,
 And portion to his tribes the wide domain.
 To them my vassals had resign'd a soil,
 With teeming plenty, to reward their toil. 240
 There with commutual zeal we both had strove
 In acts of dear benevolence and love:
 Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
 And death alone dissolv'd the friendly band!
 Some envious pow'r the blissful scene destroys;
 Vanish'd are all the visionary joys: 246
 The soul of friendship to my hope is lost,
 Fated to wander from his natal coast!

He ceas'd; a gust of grief began to rise:
 Fast streams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes;
 Fast for the sire the filial sorrows flow; 251
 The weeping monarch swells the mighty woe:
 Thy cheeks, Pisistratus, the tears bedew,
 While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
 Thy martial brother, on the Phrygian plain 255
 Extended pale, by swarthy Memnon slain!
 But silence soon the son of Nestor broke,
 And melting with fraternal pity spoke:

Frequent, O king, was Nestor wont to raise
 And charm attention with thy copious praise: 260

To crown thy various gifts, the sage assign'd
 The glory of a firm capacious mind:
 With that supêrior attribute cōtroul
 This ūnavailing impotence of soul.
 Let not your roof with echoing grief resound, 265
 Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd:
 But when from dewy shade emerging bright
 Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
 Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
 Are all, alas! the living can bestow: 270
 O'er the congenial dust enjoin'd to shear
 The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
 Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
 I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
 And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name 275
 Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame;
 With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
 To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
 Too early snatch'd by fate ere known to me!
 I boast a witness of his worth in thee. 280
 Young and mature! the monarch thus rejoins,
 In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
 Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
 In early bloom an oracle of age.

Whene'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to show'r
 To bless the natal, and the nuptial hour; 286
 From the great sire transmissive to the race,
 The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
 Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom:
 Around thee full of years, thy offspring bloom,
 Expert of arms, and prudent in debate; 291
 The gifts of heav'n to guard thy hoary state,
 But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
 Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.
 To move thy suit, Telemachus, delay, 295
 Till heav'n's revolving lamp restores the day.

He said, Asphalion swift the laver brings;
 Alternate all partake the grateful springs:
 Then from the rites of purity repair,
 And with keen gust the sav'ry viands share. 300
 Meantime with genial joy to warm the soul,
 Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl;
 Temper'd with drugs of sov'reign use, t' assuage
 The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;
 To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care, 305
 And dry the tearful sluices of despair:
 Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted
 mind

All sense of woe delivers to the wind:

Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,
 Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away, 310
 Or darling son, oppress'd by ruffian-force,
 Fell breathless at his feet, a mangled corpse;
 From morn to eve, impassive and serene,
 The man entranc'd would view the deathful scene.
 These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life, 315
 Bright Helen learn'd from Thone's imperial wife;
 Who sway'd the sceptre where prolific Nile
 With various simples clothes the fatten'd soil.
 With wholesome herbage mix'd, the direful bane
 Of vegetable venom taints the plain; 320
 From Pæon sprung, their patron-god imparts
 To all the Pharian race his healing arts.
 The bev'rage now prepar'd t' inspire the feast,
 The circle thus the beauteous queen address:
 Thron'd in omnipotence, supremest Jove 325
 Tempers the fates of human race above;
 By the firm sanction of his sov'reign will,
 Alternate are decreed our good and ill.
 To feastful mirth be this white hour assign'd,
 And sweet discourse, the banquet of the mind.
 Myself assisting in the social joy, 331
 Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit in Troy:

Sole witness of the deed I now declare;
 Speak you (who saw) his wonders in the war.

Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own sabre
 gave, 335

In the vile habit of a village slave,
 The foe deceiv'd, he pass'd the tented plain,
 In Troy to mingle with the hostile train.
 In this attire secure from searching eyes,
 Till haply piercing through the dark disguise 340
 The chief I challeng'd; he, whose practis'd wit
 Knew all the serpent-mazes of deceit,
 Eludes my search: but when his form I view'd
 Fresh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
 His limbs in military purple dress'd; 345
 Each bright'ning grace the genuine Greek confess'd.

A previous pledge of sacred faith obtain'd,
 Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
 To keep his stay conceal'd; the chief declar'd
 The plans of war against the town prepar'd. 350
 Exploring then the secrets of the state,
 He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate:
 And, safe returning to the Grecian host,
 Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast.

Loud grief resounded thro' the tow'rs of Troy, 355
 But my pleas'd bosom glow'd with secret joy:
 For then with dire remorse, and conscious shame,
 I view'd th' effects of that disastrous flame,
 Which, kindled by th' imperious queen of love,
 Constrain'd me from my native realm to rove: 360
 And oft in bitterness of soul deplor'd
 My absent daughter, and my dearer lord;
 Admir'd among the first of human race,
 For ev'ry gift of mind and manly grace.

Right well, replied the king, your speech displays
 365

The matchless merit of the chief you praise:
 Heroes in various climes myself have found,
 For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd;
 But Ithacus, unrivall'd in his claim,
 May boast a title to the loudest fame: 370
 In battle calm, he guides the rapid storm,
 Wise to resolve, and patient to perform.
 What wond'rous conduct in the chief appear'd,
 When the vast fabric of the steed we rear'd!
 Some dæmon anxious for the Trojan doom, 375
 Urg'd you with great Deiphobus to come,
 T' explore the fraud; with guile oppos'd to guile,
 Slow-pacing thrice around th' insidious pile,

Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
 Your accent varying as their spouses spoke: 380
 The pleasing sounds each latent warrior warm'd,
 But most Tydides' and my heart alarm'd:
 To quit the steed we both impatient press,
 Threat'ning to answer from the dark recess.
 Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd, 385
 And the vain ardours of our love restrain'd:
 But Anticlus unable to controul,
 Spoke loud the language of his yearning soul:
 Ulysses straight with indignation fir'd,
 (For so the common care of Greece requir'd) 390
 Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
 Till on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs died.
 Meantime Minerva from the fraudulent horse
 Back to the court of Priam bent your course.

Inclement fate! Telemachus replies, 395
 Frail is the boasted attribute of wise:
 The leader, mingling with the vulgar host,
 Is in the common mass of matter lost!
 But now let sleep the painful waste repair
 Of sad reflection, and corroding care. 400

He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
 At Helen's beck prepare the room of state;

Beneath an ample portico, they spread
 The downy fleece to form the slumb'rous bed,
 And o'er soft palls of purple grain unfold 405
 Rich tapestry, stiff with inwoven gold:
 Then through th' illumin'd dome, to balmy rest
 Th' obsequious herald guides each princely guest:
 While to his regal bow'r the king ascends,
 And beauteous Helen on her lord attends. 410

Soon as the morn, in orient purple drest,
 Unbarr'd the portal of the roseate east,
 The monarch rose; magnificent to view,
 Th' imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw:
 The glitt'ring zone athwart his shoulder cast,
 A starry falchion low-depending grac'd; 416
 Clasp'd on his feet th' embroider'd sandals shine;
 And forth he moves, majestic and divine.
 Instant to young Telemachus he press'd,
 And thus benevolent his speech address'd: 420

Say, royal youth, sincere of soul, report
 What cause hath led you to the Spartan court?
 Do public or domestic cares constrain
 This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main?

O highly favour'd delegate of Jove! 425

(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love

And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
 A suppliant to your royal court I come.
 Our sov'reign seat a lewd usurping race
 With lawless riot and misrule disgrace; 430
 To pamper'd insolence devoted fall
 Prime of the flock, and choicest of the stall:
 For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
 And all to mount th' imperial bed aspire.
 But prostrate I implore, O king! relate 435
 The mournful series of my father's fate!
 Each known disaster of the man disclose,
 Born by his mother to a world of woes!
 Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
 To wound with storied grief the filial ear: 440
 If e'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
 Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,
 If Phrygian camps the friendly toils attest,
 To the sire's merit give the son's request.

Deep from his inmost soul Atrides sigh'd, 445
 And thus indignant to the prince reply'd:
 Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
 An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!
 So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
 A timorous hind the lion's court invades, 450

Leaves in the fatal lair the tender fawns,
 Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flow'ry lawns:
 Meantime return'd, with dire remorseless sway
 The monarch-savage rends the trembling prey.
 With equal fury, and with equal fame, 455
 Ulysses soon shall reassert his claim.

O Jove, supreme, whom gods and men revere!
 And thou, to whom 'tis giv'n to gild the sphere!
 With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
 The chief adopted by the martial maid! 460
 Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
 As when contending on the Lesbian shore
 His prowess Philomelides confess'd,
 And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bless'd:
 Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne, 465
 Their love presumptuous shall with life atone.

With patient ear, O royal youth, attend
 The storied labours of thy father's friend:
 Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
 But truth severe shall dictate to my tongue: 470
 Learn what I heard the sea-born seer relate,
 Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.

Long on th' Egyptian coast by calms confin'd,
 Heav'n to my fleet refus'd a prosp'rous wind:

No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim slain! 475
 For this the gods each fav'ring gale restrain:
 Jealous, to see their high behests obey'd;
 Severe, if men th' eternal rites evade.
 High o'er a gulfy sea, the Pharian isle
 Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile: 480
 Her distance from the shore, the course begun
 At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
 A galley measures; when the stiffer gales
 Rise on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.
 There, anchor'd vessels safe in harbour lie, 485
 Whilst limpid springs the failing cask supply.

And now the twentieth sun descending, laves
 His glowing axle in the western waves;
 Still with expanded sails we court in vain
 Propitious winds to waft us o'er the main: 490
 And the pale mariner at once deplores
 His drooping vigour, and exhausted stores.
 When lo! a bright cœrulean form appears,
 The fair Eidothea! to dispel my fears;
 Proteus her sire divine. With pity press'd, 495
 Me sole the daughter of the deep address'd;
 What time, with hunger pin'd, my absent mates
 Roam the wild isle in search of rural cates,

Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood
Appease th' afflictive fierce desire of food. 500

Whoe'er thou art (the azure goddess cries)
Thy conduct ill deserves the praise of wise:
Is death thy choice, or misery thy boast,
That here inglorious on a barren coast
Thy brave associates droop, a meagre train, 505
With famine pale, and ask thy care in vain?

Struck with the kind reproach, I straight reply:
Whate'er thy title in thy native sky,
A goddess sure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks thee descendant of ethereal race: 510
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heav'nly pow'r averse my stay constrains:
O, piteous of my fate, vouchsafe to shew
(For what's sequester'd from celestial view?)
What pow'r becalms th' innavigable seas? 515
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease?

I ceas'd; when affable the goddess cried:
Observe, and in the truths I speak confide:
Th' orac'lous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
From whose high bed my birth divine I boast;
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main, 521
The delegate of Neptune's wat'ry reign.

Watch with insidious care his known abode;
 There fast in chains constrain the various god:
 Who bound, obedient to superior force, 525
 Unnerring will prescribe your destin'd course.
 If studious of your realms, you then demand
 Their state, since last you left your natal land;
 Instant the god obsequious will disclose
 Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes. 530

She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply:
 O goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely;
 Dictate, propitious, to my duteous ear
 What arts can captivate the changeful seer:
 For perilous th' essay, unheard the toil, 535
 T' elude the prescience of a god by guile.

Thus to the goddess mild my suit I end.
 Then she: Obedient to my rule, attend:
 When thro' the zone of heav'n the mounted sun
 Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run; 540
 The seer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,
 Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,
 His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
 The Phocæ swift surround his rocky cave,
 Frequent and full; the consecrated train 545
 Of her, whose azure trident awes the main:

There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales
 An oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
 To that recess, commodious for surprise,
 When purple light shall next suffuse the skies,
 With me repair; and from thy warrior band
 Three chosen chiefs of dauntless soul command:
 Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
 For strong the god, and perfected in guile.
 Stretch'd on the shelly shore, he first surveys 555
 The flouncing herd ascending from the seas;
 Their number summ'd, repos'd in sleep profound
 The scaly charge their guardian god surround:
 So with his batt'ning flocks the careful swain
 Abides, pavilion'd on the grassy plain. 560
 With pow'rs united, obstinately bold,
 Invade him, couch'd amid the scaly fold.
 Instant he wears, elusive of the rape,
 The mimic force of ev'ry savage shape:
 Or glides with liquid lapse a murm'ring stream,
 Or wrapt in flame, he glows at ev'ry limb. 566
 Yet still retentive, with redoubled might
 Thro' each vain passive form constrain his flight.
 But when, his native shape resum'd, he stands
 Patient of conquest, and your cause demands; 570

The cause that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
 And soothe the vanquish'd with a victor's pray'r.
 The bands relax'd, implore the seer to say
 What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
 Who straight propitious, in prophetic strain 575
 Will teach you to repass th' unmeasur'd main.
 She ceas'd, and bounding from the shelfy shore,
 Round the descending nymph the waves redound-
 ing roar.

High wrapt in wonder of the future deed,
 With joy impetuous, to the port I speed: 580
 The wants of nature with repast suffice,
 Till night with grateful shade involv'd the skies,
 And shed ambrosial dews. Fast by the deep,
 Along the tented shore, in balmy sleep,
 Our cares were lost. When o'er the eastern lawn,
 In saffron robes the daughter of the dawn 586
 Advanc'd her rosy steps; before the bay,
 Due ritual honours to the gods I pay;
 Then seek the place the sea-born nymph assign'd,
 With three associates of undaunted mind. 590
 Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed strand
 For each a bed, she scoops the hilly sand:
 Then from her azure car the finny spoils
 Of four vast Phocæ takes, to veil her wiles:

Beneath the finny spoils extended prone, 595
 Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to shun;
 New from the corpse, the scaly frauds diffuse
 Unsav'ry stench of oil, and brackish ooze:
 But the bright sea-maid's gentle pow'r implor'd,
 With nectar'd drops the sick'ning sense restor'd.

Thus till the sun had travell'd half the skies
 Ambush'd we lie, and wait the bold emprise:
 When thronging quick to bask in open air,
 The flocks of ocean to the strand repair;
 Couch'd on the sunny sand, the monsters sleep:
 Then Proteus mounting from the hoary deep, 606
 Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit:
 (In order told, we make the sum complete)
 Pleas'd with the false review, secure he lies,
 And leaden slumbers press his drooping eyes. 610
 Rushing impetuous forth, we straight prepare
 A furious onset with the sound of war,
 And shouting seize the god: our force t' evade
 His various arts he soon resumes in aid:
 A lion now, he curls a surgy mane; 615
 Sudden, our bands a spotted pard restrain;
 Then arm'd with tusks, and lightning in his eyes,
 A boar's obscener shape the god belies:

On spiry volumes, there, a dragon rides; 619
 Here, from our strict embrace a stream he glides:
 And last, sublime his stately growth he rears,
 A tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.

Vain efforts! with superior pow'r compress'd,
 Me with reluctance thus the seer address'd:
 Say, son of Atreus, say what god inspir'd 625
 This daring fraud, and what the boon desir'd?

I thus: O thou, whose certain eye foresees
 The fix'd event of fate's remote decrees;
 After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
 Still on this desert isle my fleet is moor'd; 630
 Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! say,
 What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
 What vows repentant will the pow'r appease,
 To speed a prosp'rous voyage o'er the seas?

To Jove (with stern regard the god replies) 635
 And all th' offended synod of the skies,
 Just hecatombs with due devotion slain,
 Thy guilt absolv'd, a prosp'rous voyage gain.
 To the firm sanction of thy fate attend!
 An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend, 640
 Nor sight of natal shore, nor regal dome
 Shalt yet enjoy, but still art doom'd to roam.

Once more the Nile, who from the secret source
 Of Jove's high seat descends with sweepy force,
 Must view his billows white beneath thy oar, 645
 And altars blaze along his sanguine shore.
 Then will the gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
 To thy long vows a safe return accord.

He ceas'd: heart-wounded with afflictive pain,
 (Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main, 650
 A shelfy tract, and long!) O seer, I cry,
 To the stern sanction of th' offended sky
 My prompt obedience bows. But deign to say,
 What fate propitious, or what' dire dismay
 Sustain those peers, the relics of our host, 655
 Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
 Embracing left? Must I the warriors weep,
 Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep?
 Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
 The breathless heroes on their native shore? 660

Press not too far, replied the god; but cease
 To know, what known will violate thy peace:
 Too curious of their doom! ~~with~~ friendly woe
 Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
 Part live! the rest, a lamentable train! 665
 Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.

Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
 Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were
 crown'd,

Fell by disastrous fate: by tempests tost,
 A third lives wretched on a distant coast. 670

By Neptune rescu'd from Minerva's hate,
 On Gyræ, safe Oïlean Ajax sat,
 His ship o'erwhelm'd; but frowning on the floods,
 Impious he roar'd defiance to the gods;
 To his own prowess all the glory gave, 675
 The pow'r defrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.

This heard the raging ruler of the main;
 His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
 He launch'd; dividing with his forky mace
 Th' ærial summit from the marble base: 680
 The rock rush'd sea-ward with impetuous roar
 Ingulf'd, and to th' abyss the boaster bore.

By Juno's guardian aid, the wat'ry vast
 Secure of storms, your royal brother past;
 Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds
 Her spiry cliffs amid surrounding clouds, 686
 A whirling gust tumultuous from the shore,
 Across the deep his labouring vessel bore,
 In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd,
 Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd; 690

But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
 Egysthus govern'd in paternal state.
 The surges now subside, the tempest ends;
 From his tall ship the king of men descends:
 There fondly thinks the gods conclude his toil!
 Far from his own domain salutes the soil: 696
 With rapture oft' the verge of Greece reviews,
 And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
 Him thus exulting on the distant strand,
 A spy distinguish'd from his airy stand; 700
 To bribe whose vigilance, Egysthus told
 A mighty sum of ill persuading gold:
 There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
 Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career;
 And now admonish'd by his eye, to court 705
 With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
 Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
 The ministers of blood in dark surprise;
 And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
 Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd.
 Then bids prepare the hospitable treat: 711
 Vain shews of love to veil his felon-hate!
 To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
 A train of coursers, and triumphal cars,

Magnificent he leads: the royal guest, 715

Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudulent feast.

The troop forth issuing from the dark recess,

With homicidal rage the king oppress!

So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,

The sov'reign of the herd is doom'd to fall. 720

The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,

Around their lord, a mighty ruin! lie:

Mix'd with the brave, the base invaders bleed;

Egysthus sole survives to boast the deed.

He said; chill horrors shook my shiv'ring soul,

Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roll; 726

And hate, in madness of extreme despair,

To view the sun, or breathe the vital air.

But when superior to the rage of woe,

I stood restor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow; 730

Lenient of grief, the pitying god began—

Forget the brother, and resume the man:

To fate's supreme dispose the dead resign,

That care be fate's, a speedy passage thine.

Still lives the wretch who wrought the death de-
plor'd, 735

But lives a victim for my vengeful sword;

Unless with filial rage Orestes glow,

And swift prevent the meditated blow:

You timely will return a welcome guest,
 With him to share the sad funereal feast. 740

He said: new thoughts my beating heart em-
 ploy,

My gloomy soul receives a gleam of joy.

Fair hope revives; and eager I address

The prescient godhead to reveal the rest.

The doom decreed of those disastrous two 745

I've heard with pain, but oh! the tale pursue;

What third brave son of Mars the fates constrain

To roam the howling desert of the main:

Or in eternal shade if cold he lies,

Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes. 750

That chief (rejoin'd the god) his race derives

From Ithaca, and wond'rous woes survives;

Laertes' son: girt with circumfluous tides,

He still calamitous constraint abides.

Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd, 755

When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.

But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain, to move

Th' enamour'd goddess, ~~or~~ ~~to~~ ~~win~~ her love:

His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,

He lives reluctant on a foreign coast. 760

But oh, lov'd by heav'n! reserv'd to thee

A happier lot the smiling fates decree!

Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
 Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay,
 Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains 765
 Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.
 Joys ever young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
 Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
 Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:
 The fields are florid with unfading prime: 770
 From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
 Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
 But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
 The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
 This grace peculiar will the gods afford 775
 To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's
 lord.

He ceas'd, and plunging in the vast profound,
 Beneath the god the whirling billows bound.
 Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
 My friends attending at the shore I sought. 780
 Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controul,
 Till night with silent shade invests the pole;
 Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest.—
 Soon as the morn reveals the roseate east,
 With sails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh,
 Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea. 786

Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
 White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
 Then steering backward from the Pharian isle,
 We gain the stream of Jove-descended Nile: 790
 There quit the ships, and on the destin'd shore
 With ritual hecatombs the gods adore:
 Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
 A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.
 These rites to piety and grief discharg'd, 795
 The friendly gods a springing gale enlarg'd:
 The fleet swift tilting o'er the surges flew,
 Till Grecian cliffs appear'd, a blissful view!
 Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
 A story, fruitful of disastrous fate: 800
 And now, young prince, indulge my fond request;
 Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,
 Till from his eastern goal, the joyous sun
 His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.
 Meantime my train the friendly gifts prepare, 805
 Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car:
 With these, a goblet of capacious mould,
 Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
 (Form'd for libation to the gods) shall prove
 A pledge and monument of sacred love. 810

My quick return, young Ithacus rejoin'd,
 Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind:
 Did not my fate my needful haste constrain,
 Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
 Lost in delight the circling year would roll, 815
 While deep attention fix'd my list'ning soul.
 But now to Pyle permit my destin'd way,
 My lov'd associates chide my long delay:
 In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
 I take the present of the promis'd vase; 820
 The coursers for the champaign sports, retain;
 That gift our barren rocks will render vain:
 Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
 Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browse,
 But neither mead nor plain supplies, to feed 825
 The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed:
 To sea-surrounded realms the gods assign
 Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.

His hand the king with tender passion press'd,
 And smiling, thus the royal youth address'd: 830
 O early worth! soul so wise, and young,
 Proclaims you from the sage Ulysses sprung.
 Selected from my stores, of matchless price,
 An urn shall recompense your prudent choice;

Not mean the massy mould of silver, grac'd 835
 By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd:
 A pledge the sceptred pow'r of Sidon gave,
 When to his realm I plough'd the orient wave.

Thus they alternate; while with artful care
 The menial train the regal feast prepare: 840
 The firstlings of the flock are doom'd to die;
 Rich fragrant wines the cheering bowl supply;
 A female band the gift of Ceres bring;
 And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.

Meanwhile, in Ithaca, the suitor pow'rs 845
 In active games divide their jovial hours:
 In areas varied with mosaic art,
 Some whirl the disk, and some the jav'lin dart.
 Aside, sequester'd from the vast resort,
 Antinous sat spectator of the sport; 850
 With great Eurymachus, of worth confest,
 And high descent, superior to the rest;
 Whom young Noëmon lowly thus address:

My ship equipp'd within the neighboring port,
 The prince, departing for the Pylia court, 855
 Requested for his speed; but courteous, say
 When steers he home, or why this long delay?
 For Elis I should sail with utmost speed,
 T' import twelve mares with their luxurious feed,

And twelve young mules, a strong laborious race,
New to the plough, unpractis'd in the trace. 861

Unknowing of the course to Pyle design'd,
A sudden horror seiz'd on either mind:
The prince in rural bow'r they fondly thought,
Numb'ring his flocks and herds, not far remote.
Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile, 866
When spread the prince his sail for distant Pyle?
Did chosen chiefs across the gulfy main
Attend his voyage, or domestic train?
Spontaneous did you speed his secret course, 870
Or was the vessel seiz'd by fraud or force?

With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noëmon cried) the vessel was resign'd.
Who in the balance, with the great affairs
Of courts, presume to weigh their private cares?
With him, the peerage next in pow'r to you; 876
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or some celestial in his rev'rend form,
Safe from the secret rock and adverse storm,
Pilots the course, for when the glimm'ring ray
Of yester dawn disclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himself I say, and much admir'd.—
Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.

Confounded and appall'd, th' unfinish'd game
 The suitors quit, and all to council came: 885
 Antinous first th' assembled peers addrest,
 Rage sparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breast.

O shame to manhood! shall one daring boy
 The scheme of all our happiness destroy?
 Fly unperceiv'd, seducing half the flow'r, 890
 Of nobles, and invite a foreign pow'r?
 The pond'rous engine rais'd to crush us all,
 Recoiling, on his head is sure to fall.
 Instant prepare me, on the neighb'ring strand,
 With twenty chosen mates a vessel mann'd; 895
 For ambush'd close beneath the Samian shore
 His ship returning shall my spies explore:
 He soon his rashness shall with life atone,
 Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

With vast applause the sentence all approve;
 Then rise, and to the feastful hall remove: 901
 Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
 Who heard the consult of the dire divan:
 Before her dome the royal matron stands,
 And thus the message of his haste demands: 905

What will the suitors? Must my servant train
 Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,

For them to form some exquisite repast?
 Heav'n grant this festival may prove their last!
 Or if they still must live, from me remove, 910
 The double plague of luxury and love!
 Forbear, ye sons of insolence! forbear,
 In riot to consume a wretched heir.
 In the young soul illustrious thought to raise,
 Were ye not tutor'd with Ulysses' praise? 915
 Have not your fathers oft' my lord defin'd;
 Gentle of speech, beneficent of mind?
 Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
 Or in their tyrant-minions vest the pow'r:
 Ulysses let no partial favours fall, 920
 The people's parent, he protected all:
 But absent now, perfidious and ingrate!
 His stores ye ravage, and usurp his state.

He thus: O were the woes you speak the worst!
 They form a deed more odious and accurst; 925
 More dreadful than your boding soul divines:
 But pitying Love avert the dire designs!
 The darling object of your royal care
 Is mark'd to perish in a deathful snare;
 Before he anchors in his native port, 930
 From Pyle resailing and the Spartan court;

Horrid to speak! in ambush is decreed

The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed!

Sudden she sunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital streams a chilling horror froze: 935

The big round tear stands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents die.

At length, in tender language, interwove
With sighs, she thus express'd her anxious love:
Why rashly would my son his fate explore, 940

Ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore?

Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
A blank oblivion, and a friendly grave?

'Tis not, replied the sage, to Medon giv'n
To know, if some inhabitant of heav'n 945

In his young breast the daring thought inspir'd,
Or if alone, with filial duty fir'd,

The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his absent father's doom.

The sage retir'd: unable to controul 950
The mighty griefs that swell her lab'ring soul,
Rolling convulsive on the floor, is seen
The piteous object of a prostrate queen.

Words to her dumb complaint a pause supplies,
And breath, to waste in unavailing cries. 955

Around their sov'reign wept the menial fair,
 To whom she thus address'd her deep despair:
 Behold a wretch whom all the gods consign
 To woe! Did ever sorrows equal mine?
 Long to my joys my dearest lord is lost, 960
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
 Now from my fond embrace, by tempests torn,
 Our other column of the state is borne:
 Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent!—
 Unkind confed'rates in his dire intent! 965
 Ill suits it with your shews of duteous zeal,
 From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal:
 Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
 Why did you fear to trouble my repose?
 He either had obey'd my fond desire, 970
 Or seen his mother pierc'd with grief expire.
 Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave
 Whom to my nuptial train Icarius gave,
 T' attend the fruit-groves: with incessant speed
 He shall this violence of death decreed, 975
 To good Laertes tell: ~ Experienc'd age
 May timely intercept the ruffian-rage,
 Convene the tribes, the murd'rous plot reveal,
 And to their pow'r to save his race appeal.

Then Euryclea thus: My dearest dread! 980
 Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
 Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
 I own me conscious of th' unpleasing deed:
 Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
 With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd: 985
 A solemn oath impos'd, the secret seal'd,
 Till the twelfth dawn the light of heav'n reveal'd.
 Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
 He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
 But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd, 990
 Pay due devotions to the martial maid,
 And rest affianc'd in her guardian aid.
 Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
 In toils of state the miseries of age:
 'Tis impious to surmise, the pow'rs divine 995
 To ruin doom the Jove-descended line:
 Long shall the race of just Arcesius reign,
 And isles remote enlarge his old domain.

The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
 Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears: 1000
 She bathes, and rob'd, the sacred dome ascends:
 Her pious speed a female train attends:
 The salted cakes in canisters are laid,
 And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid: 1004

Daughter divine of Jove! whose arm can wield
 Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield!
 If e'er Ulysses to thy fane preferr'd
 The best and choicest of his flock and herd;
 Hear, goddess, hear, by those oblations won;
 And for the pious sire preserve the son: 1010
 His wish'd return with happy pow'r befriend,
 And on the suitors let thy wrath descend!

She ceas'd; shrill ecstasies of joy declare
 The fav'ring goddess present to the pray'r: 1014
 The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
 A signal of her hymenæal choice;
 Whilst one most jovial thus accosts the board: —
 ' Too late the queen selects a second lord;
 In evil hour the nuptial rite intends, 1019
 When o'er her son disast'rous death impends.'
 Thus he unskill'd of what the fates provide.
 But with severe rebuke Antinous cried:

These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain;
 Alarm not with discourse the menial train:
 The great event with silent hope attend; 1025
 Our deeds alone our counsel must commend.

His speech thus ended short, he frowning rose,
 And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour chose:

Down to the strand he speeds with haughty strides,
 Where anchor'd in the bay the vessel rides, 1030
 Replete with mail and military store,
 In all her tackle trim to quit the shore.
 The desp'rate crew ascend, unfurl the sails;
 (The sea-ward prow invites the tardy gales)
 Then take repast, till Hesperus display'd 1035
 His golden circlet in the western shade.

Meantime the queen without refection due,
 Heart-wounded, to the bed of state withdrew:
 In her sad breast the prince's fortunes roll,
 And hope and doubt alternate seize her soul. 1040
 So when the woodman's toil her cave surrounds,
 And with the hunter's cry the grove resounds;
 With grief and rage the mother-lion stung,
 Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young. 1044

While pensive in the silent slumb'rous shade,
 Sleep's gentle pow'rs her drooping eyes invade;
 Minerva, life-like on embodied air
 Impress'd the form of Iphimima the fair:
 (Icarius' daughter she, whose blooming charms
 Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms; 1050
 A sceptred lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
 Of Thessaly, wide stretch'd his ample reign)

As Pallas will'd, along the sable skies
 To calm the queen the phantom-sister flies.
 Swift on the regal dome descending right, 1055
 The bolted valves are pervious to her flight.
 Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
 And thus performs Minerva's high commands:

O why, Penelope, this causeless fear,
 To render sleep's soft blessing insincere? 1060
 Alike devote to sorrow's dire extreme
 The day-reflection, and the midnight dream!
 Thy son, the gods propitious will restore,
 And bid thee cease his absence to deplore.

To whom the queen (whilst yet her pensive mind
 Was in the silent gates of sleep confin'd): 1066
 O sister, to my soul for ever dear,
 Why this first visit to reprove my fear?
 How in a realm so distant should you know
 From what deep source my ceaseless sorrows flow?
 To all my hope my royal lord is lost, 1071
 His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast;
 And with consummate woe to weigh me down,
 The heir of all his honours, and his crown,
 My darling son is fled! an easy prey 1075
 To the fierce storms, or men more fierce than they;

Who, in a league of blood associates sworn,
Will intercept th' unwary youth's return.

Courage resume, the shadowy form replied,
In the protecting care of heav'n confide: 1080
On him attends the blue-ey'd martial maid;
What earthly can implore a surer aid?
Me now the guardian goddess deigns to send,
To bid thee patient his return attend.

The queen replies: If in the blest abodes 1085
A goddess, thou hast commerce with the gods;
Say, breathes my lord the blissful realm of light,
Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?
— Inquire not of his doom, the phantom cries,
I speak not all the counsel of the skies; 1090
Nor must indulge with vain discourse, or long,
The windy satisfaction of the tongue.

Swift through the valves the visionary fair
Repass'd, and viewless mix'd with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes: 1095
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The vision, manifest of future fate,
Makes her with hope her son's arrival wait.

Meantime the suitors plough the wat'ry plain,
Telemachus in thought already slain! 1100

When sight of less'ning Ithaca was lost,
 Their sail directed for the Samian coast,
 A small but verdant isle appear'd in view,
 And Asteris th' advancing pilot knew:
 An ample port the rocks projected form, 1105
 To break the rolling waves, and ruffling storm:
 That safe recess they gain with happy speed,
 And in close ambush wait the murd'rous deed.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK IV.

ARISTOTLE in his Poetics reports, that certain ancient critics reproached Homer for an indecency in making Telemachus take his abode with Menelaus, and not with his own grandfather Icarius: this, Monsieur Dacier sufficiently answers, by shewing that Icarius had settled himself in Acarnania, and not in Lacedæmon.

V. 5. *invoking Hymen's pow'r.*] Athenæus has been very severe upon this passage, as Eustathius observes, and Dacier from Eustathius.

Aristarchus, says Athenæus, misguides us, the words *τοῦ δ' εὐχοῦ δαιμόντα* led him into an error; whereas the marriage is completed, the wedded couple gone away from Menelaus, and he and Helen at Lacedæmon. The five verses, continues he (the fifteenth to the twentieth inclusively in the Greek), are taken from the eighteenth book of the Iliad, and inserted very improperly in this place by Aristarchus. Athenæus gives several reasons for his opinion, as that music and dancing were very contrary to the severe manners of the Lacedæmonians; besides, the dance was a Cretan dance, how then could it be practised among the Spartans? The poet mentions neither the name of the bard, nor one word of the subject of the songs: neither can the words *μολπῆς ἐξαρχόντες* be applied at all to the dancers, but to the musicians; and lastly, it is not to be imagined that Telemachus and Pisistratus should be so unpolite, as not to be at all affected with the music, had there been any, and yet break out into such wonder at the sight of the beauty of the palace of Menelaus. Aristarchus, adds he, thought the description of the wedding of the son and daughter of a king was too meanly and concisely described, and therefore made this addition.

But it is easy to refute Athenæus, and vindicate Aristarchus.

Athenæus understood *ἀπομπε* and *ἀγέ* in the wrong tense; they are of the imperfect: *he was sending*, or *about to send*, and not *had sent*, &c. If the marriage had been absolutely finished, why should Minerva absent herself from Menelaus, when the celebration of the nuptials is the only reason of the absence of that goddess? And as for music and dancing being contrary to the severe manners of the Lacedæmonians, this is all conjecture: Menelaus lived more than three hundred years before Lycurgus; and because such diversions were forbid in Sparta in the days of Lycurgus, must it follow that they were not used in the days of Menelaus? And should it be granted that music and dancing were not used in his times, might he not relax a little from the severity of his times, upon such an occasion of joy as the marriage of a son and daughter? I am sure these diversions are not more contrary to the severity of the Spartans, than the magnificence of the palace of Menelaus was to their simplicity. ‘But he does not name the bard, or the subject of his songs.’ But is this a reason why the verses are spurious? We should rather admire the judgment of the poet, who having so fair an opportunity to describe these nuptials, yet rejects the temptation, dismisses the whole in a few lines, and follows where his subject leads him. The objection about the dance being Cretan is not more valid: Menelaus (as we may learn from the preceding book) had been in Crete, and might bring it thence to Lacedæmon. And as for the criticism upon *ἐξαρχόντες*, it is but a fallacy; Casaubon has shown beyond contradiction, that *ἐξαρχεῖν* is applied indifferently to all those who give example to others; and consequently may be applied to dancers as well as musicians. It may be further added, that although it should be allowed that the word *ἐξαρχεῖν* is only properly applied to music, yet in this place the word would not be improperly applied to dancers; for the dancers, without usurping upon the province of the singer, might *μολπῆς ἐξαρχεῖν*, or choose those songs to which they desired to dance, as is the usage at this day.

Diodorus is of opinion, that the whole twelve lines after the second, to the fifteenth, are not genuine; but what has been said of Athenæus, may be applied to Diodorus.

V. 100. *Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile.
Next, Ethiopia, &c.]*

The words are in the original Αἰγυπλίαις επαληθεῖς; others read them Αἰγυπλίαις ἐπ' ἀληθείας, from their veracity in oracles, for which they were very famous; and indeed the word επαληθεῖς is not necessary, it being used in the very same sentence, though it must be confessed such repetitions are frequent in Homer. There is also a different reading of the word ἐρεμῖαι; some have it ἐρεμναι, or blacks; others, Ζιδονίαις, Ἀραβίας τε; but the common reading is thought the best. The Erembi are the Arabian Troglodytes. Strabo informs us, that in former ages the bounds of the Ethiopians lay near to Thebes in Egypt; so that Menelaus travelling to Thebes, might with ease visit the Ethiopians. Others have without any foundation imagined that he passed the straits of Gibraltar, and sailed to the Indies. Sidon is the capital of the Phœnicians. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 105. *where each revolving year
The teeming ewes, &c.]*

These sheep, as described by Homer, may be thought the creation of the poet, and not the production of nature: but Herodotus, says Eustathius, writes, that in Scythia the oxen have no horns through the extremity of the cold: he quotes this very verse, rightly intimating, adds Herodotus, that in hot regions the horns of cattle shoot very speedily. Aristotle directly asserts, that in Libya the young ones of horned cattle have horns immediately after they are brought into the world. So that Aristotle and Herodotus vindicate Homer. The poet adds, that the sheep breed three times in the year; these words may have a different interpretation, and imply that they breed in three seasons of the year, and not only in the spring, as in other countries; or that the sheep have at once three lambs; but the first is the better interpretation. Athenæus upon this passage writes, that there are things in other countries no less strange than what Homer relates of these sheep of Libya. Thus, in Lusitania, a country of Spain, now Portugal, there is a wonderful fruitfulness

in all cattle, by reason of the excellent temper of the air; the fruits there never rot, and the roses, violets, and asparagus, never fail above three months in the year. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 114. *The best of brothers*
. a traitress wife.]

Menelaus neither mentions Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, nor Egysthus, by name; a just indignation and resentment is the occasion of his suppressing the names of Clytemnestra and Egysthus. Through the whole *Iliad* Menelaus is described as a very affectionate brother, and the love he bears Agamemnon is the reason why he passes by his name in silence. We see that he dispatches the whole in one verse and a half: Nestor had told the story pretty largely in the preceding book, and as he was a person less nearly concerned, might speak of it with more ease and better temper than Menelaus: the poet avoids a needless repetition, and a repetition too of a story universally known to all the Greeks. The death of Agamemnon is distributed into four places in the *Odyssey*; Nestor, Menelaus, Proteus, and the shade of Agamemnon in the eleventh book, all relate it, and every one very properly. Proteus as a prophet more fully than Nestor and Menelaus, and Agamemnon more fully than them all, as being best acquainted with it. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 119. *My wars, the copious theme, &c.]* In the original Menelaus says, 'I have destroyed a house, &c.' There is an ambiguity in the expression, as Eustathius observes: for it may either signify the house of Priam, or his own in Argos; if it be understood of his own, then the meaning is, 'I have indeed great wealth, but have purchased it with the loss of my people; I could be content with the third part of it, if I could restore those to life who have perished before Troy:' if it be understood of the kingdom of Priam, the regret he shews will still appear the greater. He is enumerating his domestic happiness, and his foreign conquest of Troy; but he throws the destruction of so many brave men who fell before it, in the contrary scale; and it so far outweighs both his wealth and his glory, that they both are joyless to him. Either of these interpretations shew an excellent temper

of humanity in Menelaus, who thinks the effusion of blood too dear a price for glory. At the same time the poet gives an admirable picture of human nature, which is restless in the pursuit of what it miscalls happiness, and when in possession of it, neglects it. But the disquiet of Menelaus arises not from inconstancy of temper, but wisdom; it shews that all happiness is unsatisfactory.

V. 131. *But oh! Ulysses... &c.*] It is with admirable address that the poet falls into his subject: it is art, but it seems to be nature: this conduct has a double effect, it takes away all suspicion of flattery, for Menelaus is ignorant that the person with whom he discourses is Telemachus; this gives him a manifest evidence of the love he bears to Ulysses; the young man could not but be pleased with the praise of his father, and with the sincerity of it. It is also observable, that Menelaus builds his friendship for Ulysses upon a noble foundation; I mean the sufferings which Ulysses underwent for his friend: Menelaus ascribes not their affection to any familiarity or intercourse of entertainments, but to a more sincere cause, to the hazards which brave men undertake for a friend. In short, the friendship of Menelaus and Ulysses is the friendship of heroes. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 157. *bright Helen grac'd the room.*] Menelaus conjectured that the person he had entertained was the son of Ulysses, from the tears he shed at the name of his father, and from the resemblance there was between Ulysses and Telemachus; it might therefore have been expected that Menelaus should immediately have acknowledged Telemachus, and not delayed a full discovery one moment, out of regard to his absent friend; but Menelaus defers it upon a twofold account, to give some time to Telemachus to indulge his sorrow for his father, and recover himself from it, and also to avoid the repetition of a discovery upon the appearance of Helen, who would be curious to know the condition of the strangers.

It may be necessary to say something concerning Helen, that fatal beauty that engaged Greece and Asia in arms; she is drawn in the same colours in the Odyssey as in the Iliad; it is a vicious character, but the colours are so admirably softened by the art of

the poet, that we pardon her infidelity. Menelaus is an uncommon instance of conjugal affection: he forgives a wife who had been false to him, and receives her into a full degree of favour. But perhaps the reader might have been shocked at it, and prejudiced against Helen as a person that ought to be forgot, or have her name only mentioned to disgrace it: the poet therefore, to reconcile her to his reader, brings her in as a penitent, condemning her own infidelity in very strong expressions; she shews true modesty, when she calls herself impudent, and by this conduct we are inclined, like Menelaus, to forgive her.

V. 161, &c. *Adraste, Alcippe, Helen's maids.*] It has been observed, that Helen has not the same attendants in the Odyssey as she had in the Iliad; they perhaps might be Trojans, and consequently be left in their own country: or rather, it was an act of prudence in Menelaus, not to suffer those servants about her who had been her attendants and confidants in her infidelity. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 192. *the grace and air*
Of young Telemachus!

It may seem strange that Helen should at first view recollect the features of Ulysses in Telemachus; and that Menelaus, who was better acquainted with him, and his constant friend, should not make the same observation. But Athenæus, to reconcile this to probability, says, that women are curious and skilful observers of the likeness of children to parents, for one particular reason, that they may, upon finding any dissimilitude, have the pleasure of hinting at the unchastity of others.

V. 234. *For his abode a capital prepar'd.*] The poet puts these words in the mouth of Menelaus, to express the sincerity of his friendship to Ulysses; he intended him all advantage, and no detriment: we must therefore conclude, that Ulysses was still to retain his sovereignty over Ithaca, and only remove to Argos, to live with so sincere a friend as Menelaus. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 249. *a gust of grief began to rise, &c.*] It has been observed through the Iliad, and may be observed through the whole Odyssey, that it was not a disgrace to the greatest heroes

to shed tears; and indeed I cannot see why it should be an honour to any man, to be able to divest himself of human nature so far as to appear insensible upon the most affecting occasions. No man is born a stoic; it is art, not nature: tears are only a shame when the cause from whence they flow is mean or vicious. Here Menelaus laments a friend, Telemachus a father, Pisistratus a brother: but from what cause arise the tears of Helen? It is to be remembered that Helen is drawn in the softest colours in the Odyssey; the character of the adulteress is lost in that of the penitent: the name of Ulysses throws her into tears, because she is the occasion of all the sufferings of that brave man; the poet makes her the first in sorrow, as she is the cause of all their tears.

V. 265. *Let not your roof with echoing grief resound,
Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd.]*

It may be asked why sorrow for the dead should be more unseasonable in the evening than the morning? Eustathius answers, lest others should look upon our evening tears as the effect of wine, and not of love to the dead.

‘ Intempestivus venit inter pocula fletus,
Nec lacrymas dulci fas est miscere falerno.’

I fancy there may be a more rational account given of this expression; the time of feasting was ever looked upon as a time of joy and thanksgiving to the gods: it bore a religious veneration among the ancients, and consequently to shed tears when they should express their gratitude to the gods with joy, was esteemed a profanation.

V. 302. *Bright Helen mix'd a birth-inspiring bowl, &c.]* The conjectures about this cordial of Helen have been almost infinite. Some take Nepenthes allegorically, to signify history, music, or philosophy. Plutarch in the first of the Symposiacks affirms it to be, discourse well suiting the present passions and conditions of the hearers. Macrobius is of the same opinion, ‘ Delinimentum illud quod Helena vino miscuit, non herba fuit, non ex Indiâ succus, sed narrandi opportunitas, quæ hospitem mœroris oblitum

flexit ad gaudium. What gave a foundation to this fiction of Homer, as Dacier observes, might be this: Diodorus writes that in Egypt, and chiefly at Heliopolis, the same with Thebes, where Menelaus sojourned, as has been already observed, there lived women who boasted of certain potions, which not only made the unfortunate forget all their calamities, but drove away the most violent sallies of grief or anger. Eusebius directly affirms, that even in his time the women of Diospolis were able to calm the rage of grief or anger by certain potions. Now whether this be truth or fiction, it fully vindicates Homer, since a poet may make use of a prevailing, though false opinion.

Milton mentions this Nepenthes in his excellent mask of Comus :

‘ Behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds!
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such pow’r as this to stir up joy,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.’

But that there may be something more than fiction in this is very probable, since the Egyptians were so notoriously skilled in physic; and particularly since this very Thone, or Thonis, or Thoon, is reported by the ancients to have been the inventor of physic among the Egyptians. The description of this Nepenthes agrees admirably with what we know of the qualities and effects of opium.

It is further said of Thone, that he was king of Canopus, and entertained Menelaus hospitably before he had seen Helen; but afterwards falling in love with her, and offering violence, he was slain by Menelaus. From his name the Egyptians gave the name of Thoth to the first month of their year, and also to a city the name of Thonis. Ælian writes, that Menelaus, when he travelled to the Ethiopians, committed Helen to the protection of Thonis; that she fell in love with him, that Polydamna growing jealous confined her to the island of Pharos, but gave her an herb to preserve her from the poison of serpents, there frequent,

which from Helen was called Helenium. Strabo writes, that at Canopus, on the mouth of the Nile, there stands a city named Thonies, from king Thonis, who received Helen and Menelaus. Herodotus relates, that Thonis was governor of Canopus, that he represented the injury which Paris had done to Menelaus, to Proteus who reigned in Memphis. EUSTATHIUS.

This last remark from Herodotus is sufficient to shew, that Homer is not so fictitious as is generally imagined, that there really was a king named Proteus, that the poet builds his fables upon truth, and that it was truth that originally determined Homer to introduce Proteus into his poetry; but I intend to explain this more largely in the story of Proteus.

V. 335. *Seam'd o'er with wounds, &c.*] The poet here shews his judgment in passing over many instances of the sufferings of Ulysses, and relating this piece of conduct, not mentioned by any other author. The art of Ulysses in extricating himself from difficulties is laid down as the ground-work of the poem, he is *πολυτροπος*, and this is an excellent example of it. This further shews the necessity of the appearance of Helen, no other person being acquainted with the story. If this stratagem be not a reality, yet it bears the resemblance of it; and Megabysus the Persian (as Eustathius observes) practised it, as we learn from history. We may reasonably conjecture that Ulysses was committed to Helen, in hopes that he would discover the affairs of the army more freely to her than any other person; for what could be more agreeable to a Greek, than to be committed to the care of a Greek, as Ulysses was to Helen? By the same conduct the poet raises the character of Helen, by making her shew her repentance by an act of generosity to her countryman. The original says she gave an oath to Ulysses not to discover him before he was in safety in the Grecian army: now this does not imply that she ever discovered to the Trojans that Ulysses had entered Troy: the contrary opinion is most probable; for it cannot be imagined but all Troy must have been incensed greatly against her, had they known that she had concealed one of their mortal enemies, and dismissed him in safety: it was sufficient for Ulysses to take her oath that she would not discover him, till he was in

security: he left her future conduct to her own discretion. It is probable that she furnished Ulysses with a sword, for in his return he slew many Trojans: he came to Troy, observes Eustathius, in rags, and like a slave; and to have concealed a sword, would have endangered his life upon a discovery of it, and given strong suspicions of an impostor.

V. 351. *Exploring then the secrets of the state.*] The word *φρονις* is here used in a large sense: it takes in all the observations Ulysses made during his continuance in Troy, it takes in the designs and counsels of the enemy, his measuring the gates, the height of the walls, the easiest place for an assault or ambush, the taking away the palladium, or whatever else a wise man may be supposed to observe, or act, in execution of such a stratagem. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 357. *For then with dire remorse, &c.*] The conclusion of this speech is very artful: Helen ascribes her seduction to Venus, and mentions nothing of Paris. Instead of naming Troy, she conceals it, and only says she was carried thither, leaving Troy to the imagination of Menelaus; she suffers not herself to mention names so odious now to herself, and even to Menelaus, as Paris and Troy. She compliments Menelaus very handsomely, and says, that he wanted no accomplishment either in mind or body: it being the nature of man not to resent the injuries of a wife so much upon the account of her being corrupted, but of the preference she gives to another person; he looks upon such a preference as the most affecting part of the injury. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 365. *Menelaus's answer.*] The judgment of the poet in continuing the story concerning Ulysses is not observed by any commentator. Ulysses is the chief hero of the poem, every thing should have a reference to him, otherwise the narration stands still without any advance towards the conclusion of it. The poet therefore, to keep Ulysses in our minds, dwells upon his sufferings and adventures: he supplies his not appearing in the present scene of action, by setting his character before us, and continually forcing his prudence, patience, and valour, upon our observation. He uses the same art and judgment with relation to Achilles in the Iliad: the hero of the poem is absent from the chief scenes

of action during much of the time which that poem comprises, but he is continually brought into the mind of the reader, by recounting his exploits and glory.

V. 375. *Some dæmon anxious for the Trojan doom.*] It is the observation of Eustathius, that these words are very artfully introduced to vindicate Helen; they imply that what she acted was by compulsion, and to evidence this more clearly, Deiphobus is given her for an attendant, as a spy upon her actions, that she might not conceal any thing that should happen, but act her part well, by endeavouring to deceive the Greeks in favour of Troy. It is the dæmon, not Helen, that is in fault; this, continues Eustathius, answers many objections that lie against Helen: for if she was a real penitent, as she herself affirms, how comes she to endeavour to deceive the Greeks by the disguise of her voice, into more misery than had yet arisen from a ten years war? Or indeed is it credible that any person could modulate her voice so artfully, as to resemble so many voices? And how could the Greeks inclosed in the wooden horse believe that their wives, who were in Greece, could be arrived in so short a space as they had been concealed there, from the various regions of Greece, and meet together in Troy? Would the wives of these heroes come into an enemy's country, when the whole army, except these latent heroes, were retired from it? this is ridiculous and impossible. I must confess there is great weight in these objections: but Eustathius answers all by the interposition of the dæmon; and by an idle tradition that Helen had the name of Echo, from the faculty of mimicing sounds; and that this gift was bestowed upon her by Venus when she married Menelaus, that she might be able to detect him, if he should prove false to her bed, by imitating the voice of the suspected person (but Menelaus had more occasion for this faculty than Helen). As for the excuse of the dæmon, it equally excuses all crimes: for instance, was Helen false to Menelaus? The dæmon occasioned it: does she act an impostor to destroy all her Grecian friends, and even Menelaus? The dæmon compels her to it: the dæmon compels her to go with Deiphobus, to surround the horse thrice, to sound the sides of it, to endeavour to surprise the latent Greeks by an imitation of the

voices of their wives, and, in short, to act like a person that was very sincere in mischief.

Dacier takes another course, and gives up Helen, but remarks the great address of Menelaus. Helen had, said she, long desired nothing so much as to return to Lacedæmon; and her heart had long been wholly turned to Menelaus: Menelaus is not at all convinced of this pretended sincerity; but it would have been too gross, after he had taken her again to his bed, to convict her of falsehood: he therefore contents himself barely to reply, that some dæmon, an enemy to the Greeks, had forced her to a conduct disagreeable to her sincerity. This (continues Dacier) is an artful, but severe irony.

As for the objection concerning the impossibility of the Greeks believing their wives could be in Troy; she answers, that the authors of this objection have not sufficiently considered human nature. The voice of a beloved person might of a sudden, and by surprise, draw from any person a word involuntarily, before he has time to make reflection. This undoubtedly is true, where circumstances make an imposture probable; but here is an impossibility; it is utterly impossible to believe the wives of these heroes could be in Troy. Besides, Menelaus himself tells us, that even he had fallen into the snare, but Ulysses prevented it: this adds to the incredibility of the story; for if this faculty of mimicry was given upon his marriage with Helen, it was nothing new to him; he must be supposed to be acquainted with it, and consequently be the less liable to surprise: nay it is not impossible, but the experiment might have been made upon him before Helen fled away with Paris.

In short, I think this passage wants a further vindication; the circumstances are low, if not incredible. Virgil, the great imitator of Homer, has given us a very different and more noble description of the destruction of Troy: he has not thought fit to imitate him in this description.

If we allow Helen to act by compulsion, to have feared the Trojans, and that Deiphobus was sent as a spy upon her actions; yet this is no vindication of her conduct: she still acts a mean

part, and through fear becomes an accomplice in endeavouring to betray and ruin the Greeks.

I shall just add, that after the death of Paris, Helen marries Deiphobus; that the story of the wooden horse is probably founded upon the taking of Troy by an engine called a horse, as the like engine was called a ram by the Romans.

V. 462: *As when contending on the Lesbian shore.*] The poet here gives an account of one of Ulysses's adventures. Philomelides was king of Lesbos, and Eustathius observes, that there was a tradition that Ulysses and Diomedes slew him, and turned a stately monument he had raised for himself into a public place for the reception of strangers.

V. 479. . . . *The Pharian isle.*] This description of Pharos has given great trouble to the critics and geographers; it is generally concluded, that the distance of Pharos is about seven stadia from Alexandria; Ammianus Marcellinus mentions this very passage thus, l. xxii. 'Insula Pharos, ubi Protea cum Phocorum gregibus diversatum Homerus fabulatur inflatus, à civitatis littore mille passibus disparata,' or, 'about a mile distant from the shores.' How then comes Homer to affirm it to be distant a full day's sail? Dacier answers, that Homer might have heard that the Nile, continually bringing down much earthy substance, had enlarged the continent: and knowing it not to be so distant in his time, took the liberty of a poet, and described it as still more distant in the days of Menelaus. But Dacier never sees a mistake in Homer. Had his poetry been worse if he had described the real distance of Pharos? It is allowable in a poet, to disguise the truth, to adorn his story; but what ornament has he given his poetry by this enlargement? Bochart has fully proved that there is no accession to the continent from any substance that the Nile brings down with it: the violent agitation of the seas prohibits it from lodging, and forming itself into solidity. Eratosthenes is of opinion, that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of Nile: but Strabo answers, that his silence about them is not an argument of his ignorance, for neither has he ever mentioned where he was born. But Strabo does not enter fully into the meaning of Eratosthenes: Eratosthenes does not mean that Homer was ignorant

of the mouths of Nile from his silence, but because he places Pharos at the distance of a whole day's sail from the continent. The only way to unite this inconsistency is to suppose, that the poet intended to specify the Pelusiæ mouth of Nile, from which Pharos stands about a day's sail: but this is submitted to the critics.

I cannot tell whether one should venture to make use of the word Nile in the translation, it is doubtless an anachronism; that name being unknown in the times of Homer and Menelaus, when the Nile was called *Ægyptus*. Homer in this very book

..... *Αἰγυπτιόιο Διὶ ποταμῷ ποταμῷ.*

Yet on the other hand, this name of *Ægyptus* is so little known, that a common reader would scarce distinguish the river from the country; and indeed universal custom has obtained for using the Latin name instead of the Grecian, in many other instances which are equally anachronisms: witness all the names of the gods and goddesses throughout Homer; Jupiter for Zeus, Juno for Erè, Neptune for Posidaon, &c.

V. 499. *Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood.*] Menelaus says, hunger was so violent among his companions, that they were compelled to eat fish. Plutarch in his *Symposiacks* observes, that among the Syrians and Greeks, to abstain from fish was esteemed a piece of sanctity; that though the Greeks were encamped upon the Hellespont, there is not the least intimation that they eat fish, or any sea provision; and that the companions of Ulysses, in the twelfth book of the *Odyssey*, never sought for fish till all their other provisions were consumed, and that the same necessity compelled them to eat the herds of the sun which induced them to taste fish. No fish is ever offered in sacrifice: the Pythagoreans in particular command fish not to be eaten more strictly than any other animal: fish afford no excuse at all for their destruction, they live as it were in another world, disturb not our air, consume not our fruits, or injure the waters; and therefore the Pythagoreans, who were unwilling to offer violence to any animals, fed very little, or not at all, on fishes. I thought it necessary to insert this from Plutarch, be-

cause it is an observation that explains other passages in the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

V. 521. *Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main.*] Eustathius enumerates various opinions concerning Proteus; some understand Proteus allegorically to signify the first matter which undergoes all changes; others make him an emblem of true friendship, which ought not to be settled till it has been tried in all shapes; others make Proteus a picture of a flatterer, who takes up all shapes, and suits himself to all forms, in compliance to the temper of the person whom he courts. The Greeks (observes Diodorus) imagined all these metamorphoses of Proteus to have been borrowed from the practices of the Egyptian kings, who were accustomed to wear the figures of lions, bulls, or dragons, in their diadems, as emblems of royalty, and sometimes that of trees, &c. not so much for ornament as terror. Others took Proteus to be an enchanter; and Eustathius recounts several that were eminent in this art, as Cratisthenes the Phliasian (which Dacier renders by mistake Calisthenes the Physician) who when he pleased could appear all on fire, and assume other appearances to the astonishment of the spectators: such also was Xenophon, Scymnus of Tarentum, Philippides of Syracuse, Heraclitus of Mitylene, and Nymphodorus, all practisers of magical arts; and Eustathius recites that the Phocæ were made use of in their incantations. Some write that Proteus was an Egyptian tumbler, who could throw himself into variety of figures and postures; others, a stage-player; others, that he was a great general, skilled in all the arts and stratagems of war. Dacier looks upon him to have been an enchanter, or *Σαυματοποιός*. It is certain from Herodotus, that there was in the times of Menelaus, a king named Proteus, who reigned in Memphis; that Egypt was always remarkable for those who excelled in magical arts; thus Jannes and Jambres changed, at least in appearance, a rod into a serpent, and water into blood: it is not therefore improbable but that Menelaus, hearing of him while he was in Egypt, went to consult him as an enchanter, which kind of men always pretended to fore-know events: this perhaps was the real foundation of the whole story concerning Proteus; the rest is the fiction and embellish-

ment of the poet, who ascribes to his Proteus whatever the credulity of men usually ascribes to enchanters.

V. 569. *But when, his native shape resum'd, &c.*] This is founded upon the practice of enchanters, who never give their answers, till they have astonished the imagination of those who consult them with their juggling delusions. Dacier.

V. 613. *And shouting seize the god:*] Proteus has, through the whole story, been described as a god who knew all things; it may then be asked, how comes it that he did not foreknow the violence that was designed against his own person? and is it not a contradiction, that he who knew Menelaus without information, should not know that he lay in ambush to seize him? The only answer that occurs to me is, that these enchanters never pretend to have an inherent foreknowledge of events, but learn things by magical arts, and by recourse to the secrets of their profession; so that Proteus having no suspicion, had not consulted his art, and consequently might be surprised by Menelaus: so far is agreeable to the pretensions of such deluders: the poet indeed has drawn him in colours stronger than life; but poetry adds or detracts at pleasure, and is allowed frequently to step out of the way, to bring a foreign ornament into the story.

V. 635. *To Jove Just hecatombs &c.*] Homer continually inculcates morality, and piety to the gods; he gives in this place a great instance of the necessity of it. Menelaus cannot succeed in any of his actions, till he pays due honours to the gods; the neglect of sacrifice is the occasion of all his calamity, and the performance of it opens a way to all his future prosperity.

V. 643. *Nile, who from the secret source
Of Jove's high seat descends*]

Homer, it must be confessed, gives the epithet *Διπτερης* generally to all rivers; if he had used it here peculiarly, there might have been room to have imagined that he had been acquainted with the true cause of the inundations of this famous river: the word *Διπτερης* implies it: for it is now generally agreed, that these prodigious inundations proceed from the vast rains and the melting of the snows on the mountains of the Moon in Ethiopia, about

the autumnal equinox: when those rains begin to fall, the river by degrees increases, and as they abate, it decreases; the word *Διπρετης* is therefore peculiarly proper when applied to the Nile; for though all rivers depend upon the waters that fall from the air, or *αὐτὸς Διός*, yet the Nile more especially; for when the rain ceases, the Nile consists only of seven empty channels.

V. 682. *and to th' abyss the boaster bore.*] It is in the original, 'He died, having drunk the salt water.' This verse has been omitted in many editions of Homer; and the ancients, says Eustathius, blame Aristarchus for not marking it as a verse that ought to be rejected; the simplicity of it consists in the sense, more than in the terms, and it is unworthy of Proteus to treat the death of Ajax with pleasantry, as he seems to do, by adding, 'having drunk salt water;' but why may not Proteus be supposed to be serious, and the term *Ἀλμυρον ὕδαρ* to imply no more than that he was drowned in the waves of the ocean? I know only one reason that can give any colour to the objection, viz. its being possibly become a vulgar expression, and used commonly in a ludicrous sense; then indeed it is to be avoided in poetry, but it does not follow, because perhaps it might be used in this manner in the days of these critics, that therefore it was so used in the days of Homer. What was poetical in the time of the poet, might be grown vulgar in the time of the critics.

V. 719. *So whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall, &c.*] Dacier translates *βέν*, by taureau, a bull; and misunderstands Eustathius, who directly says, that in the second Iliad the poet compares Agamemnon to a bull, in this place to an *ὄξ*, ταυρῷ *σινάσεν* *νυν δὲ βοὶ αὐτὸν ὁμοίωσεν*. The one was undoubtedly designed to describe the courage and majestic port of a warrior, the other to give us an image of a prince falling in full peace and plenty, *ὡς βὼν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ*.

V. 749. *Or in eternal shade if cold he lies.*] Proteus in the beginning of his relation had said, that 'one person was alive, and remained enclosed by the ocean:' how then comes Menelaus here to say, Give me an account of that other person who is alive, or dead? Perhaps the sorrow which Menelaus conceived for his friend Ulysses, might make him fear the worst; and Proteus

adding, 'enclosed by the ocean,' might give a suspicion that he was dead, the words being capable of ambiguity. However this be, it sets the friendship of Menelaus in a strong light: where friendship is sincere, a state of uncertainty is a state of fears, we dread even possibilities, and give them an imaginary certainty. Upon this, one of the finest compliments that a poet ever made to a patron turns, that of Horace to Mæcenas, in the first of the Epodes.

It may not perhaps be disagreeable to the reader to observe, that Virgil has borrowed this story of Proteus from Homer, and translated it almost literally.

V. 765. *Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
Of utmost earth, &c.]*

This is the only place in which the Elysian field is mentioned in Homer. The conjectures of the ancients are very various about it: Plato in his Phæd. places it in *cœlo stellato*, or the region of the stars; but since Homer fixes it *σε πρὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ γαίης*, or (as Milton expresses it) at the 'earth's green end,' I will pass over the conjectures of others, especially since the *μακρόν Νηοί*, by which others express Elysium, confine it to this world.

Strabo, says Eustathius, places it not far from Maurusia, that lies near the Straits: it is supposed by Bochart, as Dacier observes, that the fable is of Phœnician extraction, that Alizuth in Hebrew signifies joy or exultation, which word the Greeks, adapting to their way of pronunciation, called Elysium. If this be true, I should come into an opinion that has much prevailed, that the Greeks had heard of Paradise from the Hebrews; and that the Hebrews describing Paradise as a place of Alizuth, or joy, gave occasion to all the fables of the Grecian Elysium.

V. 806. *These sprightly coursers.]* How comes it to pass that Menelaus proffers three horses to Telemachus? This was a complete set among the ancients, they used one pole-horse and two leaders. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 822. *That gift our barren rocks will render vain.]* This passage where Telemachus refuses the horses has been much observed, and turned to a moral sense, viz. as a lesson to men to

desire nothing but what is suitable to their conditions. Horace has introduced it into his *Epistles*:

‘ *Haud malè Telemachus, proles, patientis Ulyssæi ;
Non est aptus equis Ithacæ locus, ut neque planis
Porrectus spaciis, nec multæ prodigus herbæ:
Atride, magis apta tibi tua dona relinquam.*’

This is the reason why Ulysses (as Eustathius observes upon the tenth of the *Iliad*) leaves the horses of Rhesus to the disposal of Diomedes; so that the same spirit of wisdom reigned in Telemachus, that was so remarkable in Ulysses. This is the reason why Menelaus smiled; it was not at the frankness or simplicity of Telemachus, but it was a smile of joy, to see the young prince inherit his father’s wisdom.

It is the remark of Eustathius, that Telemachus is far from exalting the nature of his country; he confesses it to be barren, and more barren than the neighbouring islands; yet that natural and laudable affection which all worthy persons have for their country, makes him prefer it to places of a more happy situation. This appears to me a replication to what Menelaus had before offered concerning the transplantation of Ulysses to Sparta; this is contained in *ἡμοῖο τόπος*; and then the meaning is, It is true Ithaca is a barren region, yet more desirable than this country of Lacedæmon, this *ἡμοῖο τόπος γαῖα*. It is the more probable from the offer of horses which Menelaus had then made, and is also another reason for the smile of Menelaus.

Eustathius remarks that Menelaus, though he has expressed the greatest friendship for Ulysses, yet makes no offer to restore the fortunes of his friend by any military assistance; though he had a most fair opportunity given him to repay the past kindness of Ulysses to his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus; and how comes Telemachus not to ask it either of Nestor or Menelaus? He answers, that this depended upon the uncertainty they were yet under, concerning the life of Ulysses. But the true reason in my opinion is, that the nature of epic poetry requires a contrary conduct: the hero of the poem is to be the chief agent, and the re-establishment of his fortunes must be owing to his

own wisdom and valour. I have enlarged upon this already, so that there is no occasion in this place to insist upon it.

V. 896. *For ambush'd close, &c.*] We have here another use which the poet makes of the voyage of Telemachus. Eustathius remarks that these incidents not only diversify but enliven the poem. But it may be asked why the poet makes not use of so fair an opportunity to insert a gallant action of Telemachus, and draw him not as eluding, but defeating his adversaries? The answer is easy; That the suitors sailed completely armed, and Telemachus unprovided of any weapons: and therefore Homer consults credibility, and forbears to paint his young hero in the colours of a knight in romance, who upon all disadvantages engages and defeats his opposers. But then to what purpose is this ambush of the suitors, and what part of the design of the poem is carried on by it? The very chief aim of it; To shew the sufferings of Ulysses: he is unfortunate in all relations of life, as a king, as an husband, and here very eminently as a father; these sufferings are laid down in the proposition of the *Odyssey* as essential to the poem, and consequently this ambush laid by the suitors against the life of Telemachus is an essential ornament.

V. 906. *The speech of Penelope.*] Longinus in particular commends this speech as a true picture of a person that feels various emotions of soul, and is borne by every gust of passion from sentiment to sentiment, with sudden and unexpected transitions. There is some obscurity in the Greek; this arises from the warmth with which she speaks, she has not leisure to explain herself fully, a circumstance natural to a person in anger.

Penelope gives a very beautiful picture of Ulysses: 'The best of princes are allowed to have their favourites, and give a greater share of affection than ordinary to particular persons. But Ulysses was a father to all his people alike, and loved them all as his children; a father, though he bears a more tender affection to one child than to another, yet shews them all an equal treatment; thus also a good king is not swayed by inclination, but justice, towards all his subjects.' DACIER.

One circumstance is very remarkable, and gives us a full view of a person in anger: at the very sight of Medon, Penelope flies

out into passion; she gives^r him not time to speak one syllable, but speaks herself as if all the suitors were present, and reproaches them in the person of Medon, though Medon is just to her and Ulysses; but anger is an undistinguishing passion. What she says of ingratitude, recalls to my memory what is to be found in Laertius: Aristotle being asked what thing upon earth soonest grew old? replied, 'an obligation.' *Τι ταχιστα γηρασκει;* respondit, *χαρις*.

V. 941. *Ride the wild waves*] Were this passage to be rendered literally, it would run thus, 'climb the swift ships, which are horses to men on the seas.' Eustathius observes the allusion is very just, and that the only doubt is, whether it be brought in opportunely by Penelope? It may be doubted, if the mind could find leisure to introduce such allusions? Dacier answers that Penelope speaks thus through indignation: the grief that she conceives at the hardness of men, in finding out a way to pass the seas as well as land, furnished her with these figures very naturally; for figures are agreeable to passion.

V. 1015. *The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A signal of her hymenæal choice.*]

It may be asked whence this conjecture of the suitors arises? Penelope is described as weeping grievously, and fainting away, and yet immediately the suitors conclude she is preparing for the nuptials. Eustathius answers, that undoubtedly the suitors understood the queen had purified herself with water, and supplicated the goddess Minerva, though the poet omits the relation of such little particularities. But whence is it that the poet gives a greater share of wisdom to Euryclea than to Penelope? Penelope commands a servant to fly with the news of the absence of Telemachus to Laertes, which could not at all advantage Telemachus, and only grieve Laertes: Euryclea immediately diverts her from that vain intention, advises her to have recourse to heaven, and not add misery to the already miserable Laertes: this is wisdom in Euryclea. But it must be confessed that the other is nature in Penelope: Euryclea is calm, Penelope in a passion: and Homer would have been a very bad painter of human nature, if he

had drawn Penelope, thus heated with passion, in the mild temper of Euryclea; grief and resentment give Penelope no time to deliberate, whereas Euryclea is less concerned, and consequently capable of thinking with more tranquillity.

V. 1022. *With rebuke severe Antinous cry'd.*] Antinous speaks thus in return to what had been before said by one of the suitors concerning Telemachus, viz. 'the queen little imagines that her son's death approaches;' he fears lest Penelope should know their intentions, and hinder their measures by raising the subjects of Ithaca that still retained their fidelity. DACIER.

V. 1047. *Minerva, life-like on embody'd air
Impress'd the form, &c.]*

We have here an imaginary being introduced by the poet: the whole is managed with great judgment; it is short, because it has not a direct and immediate relation to the progress of the poem, and because such imaginary intercourses have ever been looked upon as sudden in appearance, and as sudden in vanishing away. The use the poet makes of it, is to relieve Penelope from the extremity of despair, that she may act her part in the future scenes with courage and constancy. We see it is Minerva who sends this phantom to Penelope to comfort her: now this is an allegory to express, that as soon as the violence of sorrow was over, the mind of Penelope returned to some degree of tranquillity: Minerva is no more than the result of her own reflection and wisdom, which banished from her breast those melancholy apprehensions. The manner likewise of its introduction is not less judicious; the mind is apt to dwell upon those objects in sleep which make a deep impression when awake: this is the foundation of the poet's fiction; it is no more than a dream which he here describes, but he clothes it with a body, gives it a momentary existence, and by this method exalts a low circumstance into dignity and poetry.

V. 1073. *And with consummate woe, &c.]* In the original, Penelope says plainly, she is more concerned for her son than her husband. I shall translate Dacier's observations upon this passage. We ought not to reproach Penelope for this seemingly

shocking declaration, in preferring a son to a husband: her sentiment is natural and just: she had all the reason in the world to believe that Ulysses was dead, so that all her hopes, all her affection was entirely placed upon Telemachus: his loss therefore must unavoidably touch her with the highest degree of sensibility; if he is lost, she can have recourse to no second comfort. But why may we not allow the reason which Penelope herself gives for this superiority of sorrow for Telemachus? ‘Telemachus,’ says she, ‘is unexperienced in the world, and unable to contend with difficulties: whereas Ulysses knew how to extricate himself upon all emergencies.’ This is a sufficient reason why she should fear more for Telemachus than Ulysses: her affection might be greater for Ulysses than Telemachus, yet her fears might be stronger for the son than the husband, Ulysses being capable to surmount dangers by experience, Telemachus being new to all difficulties.

V. 1089. *Inquire not of his doom, &c.*] It may be asked what is the reason of this conduct, and why should the phantom refuse to relate any thing concerning the condition of Ulysses? Eustathius answers, that if the phantom had related the full truth of the story, the poem had been at an end; the very constitution of it requires that Ulysses should arrive unknown to all, but chiefly to his wife, as will appear in the prosecution of the story: the question is very natural for an affectionate wife to make concerning an absent husband; but this being an improper place for the discovery, the poet defers the solution of it, till the unravelling of the whole in the conclusion of the poem.

The action of this book takes up the space of two nights and one day, so that from the opening of the poem to the introduction of Ulysses are six days completed.

But how long a time Telemachus afterwards staid with Menelaus is a question which has employed some modern French critics; one of which maintains, that he staid no longer than these two nights at Lacedæmon: but it is evident from the sequel of the Odyssey, that Telemachus arrived again at Ithaca two days after Ulysses; but Ulysses was twenty-nine days in passing from Ogygia to Ithaca, and consequently during that whole time Tele-

machus must have been absent from Ithaca. The ground of that critic's mistake was from the silence of Homer as to the exact time of his stay, which was of no importance, being distinguished by no action, and only in an episodical part. The same thing led me into the like error in the note on V. 421 of the second book, where it was said that Telemachus returned to Ithaca in less than twelve days.

THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE DEPARTURE OF ULYSSES FROM CALYPSO.

PALLAS, in a council of the gods, complains of the detention of Ulysses in the island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwrecked, and in the last danger of death; till Leucothea, a sea-goddess, assists him, and after innumerable perils he gets ashore on Phœacia.



Painted by H^d Fuseli R.A.

Engraved by W^m Bromley.

BOOK V.

THE saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.
Then met th' eternal synod of the sky, 5
Before the god who thunders from on high,
Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
Pallas, to these, deplores th' unequal fates
Of wise Ulysses, and his toils relates;
Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying pow'r, 10
The nymph's seducements, and the magic bow'r.

Thus she began her plaint: Immortal Jove!
And you who fill the blissful seats above!
Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
Or bless a people willing to obey, 15
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And ev'ry monarch be the scourge of god,
If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
Sole in an isle, encircled by the main, 20
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,

Unbless'd he sighs, detain'd by lawless charms,
 And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.
 Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
 Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way. 25
 And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
 His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ;
 Who, pious, following his great father's fame,
 To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came.

What words are these? (reply'd the pow'r who
 forms 30
 The clouds of night, and darkens heav'n with storms)
 Is not already in thy soul decreed,
 The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
 What cannot wisdom do? Thou may'st restore
 The son in safety to his native shore; 35
 While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
 With fraud defeated measure back their way.

Then thus to Hermes the command was giv'n:
 Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heav'n!
 Go, to the nymph be these our orders borne: 40
 'Tis Jove's decree Ulysses shall return;
 The patient man shall view his old abodes,
 Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding gods;
 In twice ten days shall fertile Scheria find,
 Alone, and floating to the wave and wind. 45

The bold Phæacians there, whose haughty line
 Is mix'd with gods, half human, half divine,
 The chief shall honour as some heav'nly guest,
 And swift transport him to his place of rest.
 His vessels loaded with a plenteous store 50
 Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore,
 (A richer prize than if his joyful isle
 Receiv'd him charg'd with Ilion's noble spoil)
 His friends, his country, he shall see, though late;
 Such is our sov'reign will, and such is fate. 55

Hespoke. The god who mounts the winged winds
 Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,
 That high through fields of air his flight sustain
 O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main.
 He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly, 60
 Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye;
 Then shoots from heav'n to high Pieria's steep,
 And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
 So wat'ry fowl, that seek their fishy food,
 With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood, 65
 Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
 Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
 Thus o'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
 Till now the distant island rose in view;

Then swift ascending from the azure wave, 70
 He took the path that winded to the cave.
 Large was the grot in which the nymph he
 found,

(The fair hair'd nymph with ev'ry beauty crown'd)
 She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:

The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze: 75
 Cedar and frankincense, an od'rous pile,

Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle;
 While she with work and song the time divides,

And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.
 Without the grot, a various silvan scene 80

Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
 Poplars and alders ever quiv'ring play'd,

And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
 On whose high branches, waving with the storm,

The birds of broadest wing their mansion form, 85
 The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,

And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.

Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
 With purple clusters blushing through the green.

Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil, 90
 And ev'ry fountain pours a sev'ral rill,

In mazy windings wand'ring down the hill:

Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were
crown'd,

And glowing violets threw odours round.

A scene, where if a god should cast his sight, 95

A god might gaze, and wander with delight!

Joy touch'd the messenger of heav'n: he stay'd

Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.

Him, ent'ring in the cave, Calypso knew;

For pow'rs celestial to each other's view 100

Stand still confess'd, though distant far they lie

To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.

But sad Ulysses, by himself apart,

Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;

All on the lonely shore he sat to weep, 105

And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;

Tow'rd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,

Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Now graceful seated on her shining throne,

To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun: 110

God of the golden wand! on what behest

Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest?

Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;

'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.

Till now a stranger, in a happy hour 115

Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.

Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread:
 (Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosy-red)
 Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
 Divine refection! then recruited, spoke. 120

What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
 A goddess asks, nor can a god deny;
 Hear then the truth: By mighty Jove's command
 Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land;
 For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing would sweep
 Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep; 126
 A world of waters! far from all the ways
 Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze?
 But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
 What pow'r so great, to dare to disobey? 130
 A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
 Of all his kind most worn with misery.

The Greeks (whose arms for nine long years em-
 ploy'd

Their force on Ilion, in the tenth destroy'd)
 At length embarking in a luckless hour, 135
 With conquest proud, incens'd Minerva's pow'r:
 Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd
 With storms pursued them through the liquid world.
 There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!
 There all his dear companions found their grave

Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree, 141
 The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.
 Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
 Straight to dismiss; so destiny commands:
 Impatient fate his near return attends, 145
 And calls him to his country, and his friends.

E'en to her inmost soul the goddess shook;
 Then thus her anguish and her passion broke:
 Ungracious gods! with spite and envy curst!
 Still to your own ethereal race the worst! 150
 Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
 And love, the only sweet of life, destroy.
 Did ever goddess by her charms engage
 A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
 So when Aurora sought Orion's love, 155
 Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
 Till in Ortygia Dian's winged dart
 Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
 So when the covert of the thrice-ear'd field
 Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield, 160
 Scarce could Iasion taste her heav'nly charms,
 But Jove's swift lightning scorch'd him in her arms.
 And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs!
 Am I the envy of your blissful bow'rs?

A man, an outcast to the storm and wave, 165

It was my crime to pity, and to save,

When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,

And sunk his brave companions in the main.

Alone, abandon'd, in mid-ocean tost,

The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coast, 170

Hither this man of miseries I led,

Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed;

Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd!) to bestow

Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.

'Tis past ——— and Jove decrees he shall remove;

Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove. 176

Go then he may; (he must, if he ordain,

Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again)

But never, never shall Calypso send

To toils like these, her husband and her friend. 180

What ships have I, what sailors to convey,

What oars to cut the long laborious way?

Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go:

That last advice is all I can bestow.

To her, the pow'r who bears the charming rod:

Dismiss the man, nor irritate the god; 186

Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,

For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove?

Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
 And in a moment vanish'd from her eye. 190
 The nymph, obedient to divine command,
 To seek Ulysses, pac'd along the sand:
 Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
 With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
 And inly pining for his native shore; 195
 For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more;
 For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
 Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
 In slumber wore the heavy night away,
 On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day;
 There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone, 201
 With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
 And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
 Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

Here, on the musing mood the goddess press'd,
 Approaching soft; and thus the chief address'd: 206
 Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,
 No more in sorrows languish life away:
 Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—
 Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove, 210
 And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
 Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.

To store the vessel let the care be mine,
 With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
 And life-sustaining bread, and fair array, 215
 And prosp'rous gales to waft thee on the way.
 These if the gods with my desires comply,
 (The gods alas more mighty far than I,
 And better skill'd in dark events to come)
 In peace shall land thee at thy native home. 220

With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
 Then thus his melancholy silence broke:
 Some other motive, goddess! sways thy mind,
 (Some close design, or turn of womankind)
 Nor my return the end, nor this the way, 225
 On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea,
 Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety sails
 The best built ship, though Jove inspire the gales.
 The bold proposal how shall I fulfill;
 Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will? 230
 Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul fore-
 bodes;

Swear by the solemn oath that bind the gods!

Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso
 ey'd,

And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd:

This shews thee, friend, by old experience taught,
 And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought. 236
 How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?
 But hear, O earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!
 And thou, O Styx! whose formidable floods
 Glide through the shades, and bind th' attesting
 gods! 240

No form'd design, no meditated end
 Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
 Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
 The same my practice, were my fate the same.
 Heav'n has not curs'd me with a heart of steel, 245
 But giv'n the sense, to pity, and to feel.

Thus having said, the goddess march'd before:
 He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
 At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state;
 He fill'd the throne where Mercury had sat; 250
 For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains,
 Such as the mortal life of man sustains;
 Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
 Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
 Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress, 255
 Thus spoke Calypso to her godlike guest:

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
 O sprung from gods! In wisdom more than man!

Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
 Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part? 260
 Farewel! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
 Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
 But ah Ulysses! wert thou giv'n to know
 What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;
 Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, 265
 And e'en these slighted charms might learn to
 please.

A willing goddess and immortal life,
 Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.
 Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
 Less soft my feature, less august my frame? 270
 Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
 Their earth-born beauties with the heav'nly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
 Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
 Lov'd and ador'd, O goddess as thou art, 275
 Forgive the weakness of a human heart.
 Though well I see thy graces far above
 The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
 Of youth eternal well the diff'rence know,
 And the short date of fading charms below; 280
 Yet ev'ry day, while absent thus I roam,
 I languish to return, and die at home.

Whate'er the gods shall destine me to bear
 In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,
 'Tis mine to master with a constant mind; 285
 Inur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
 By seas, by wars, so many dangers run;
 Still I can suffer: their high will be done!

Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
 And rising night her friendly shade extends. 290
 To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
 And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
 When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
 Ulysses rob'd him in the cloak and vest.
 The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd;
 Her swelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd 296
 With flow'rs of gold: an under robe, unbound,
 In snowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
 Forth-issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
 A weighty ax, with truest temper steel'd, 300
 And double edg'd; the handle smooth and plain,
 Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain;
 And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway:
 Then to the neighb'ring forest led the way.
 On the lone island's utmost verge there stood 305
 Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,

Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
 Scorch'd by the sun, or sear'd by heav'nly fire :
 (Already dry'd) These pointing out to view,
 The nymph just shew'd him, and with tears with-
 drew. 310

Now toils the hero; trees on trees o'erthrown
 Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan :
 Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
 And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
 At equal angles these dispos'd to join, 315
 He smooth'd and squar'd 'em, by the rule and line.
 (The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
 With those he pierc'd 'em, and with clinchers
 bound.

Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
 Some bark's broad bottom to outride the storms, 320
 So large he built the raft: then ribb'd it strong
 From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
 These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
 Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
 With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind; 325
 And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.
 (With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force
 Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)

Thy loom, Calypso! for the future sails
 Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales. 330
 With stays and cordage last he rigg'd the ship,
 And, roll'd on levers, launch'd her in the deep.

Four days were past, and now, the work complete,
 Shone the fifth morn: when from her sacred seat
 The nymph dismiss'd him (od'rous garments giv'n),
 And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n;
 Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
 With water one, and one with sable wine;
 Of ev'ry kind, provisions heav'd aboard;
 And the full decks with copious viands stor'd. 340
 The goddess, last, a gentle breeze supplies,
 To curl old ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now rejoicing in the prosp'rous gales,
 With beating heart Ulysses spreads his sails;
 Plac'd at the helm he sat, and mark'd the skies, 345
 Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
 There view'd the Pleiads, and the northern team,
 And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
 To which, around the axle of the sky
 The bear revolving, points his golden eye: 350
 Who shines exalted on th' ethereal plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.

Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
 The nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.
 Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way ; 355
 The distant land appear'd the following day :
 Then swell'd to sight Phæacia's dusky coast,
 And woody mountains, half in vapours lost ;
 That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
 Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste. 360

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
 From far, on Solymé's aërial brow,
 The king of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd :
 (From Ethiopia's happy climes return'd :
 The raging monarch shook his azure head, 365
 And thus in secret to his soul he said :

Heav'ns! how uncertain are the pow'rs on high?
 Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
 In one man's favour; while a distant guest
 I shar'd secure the Ethiopian feast? 370
 Behold how near Phæacia's land he draws!
 The land, affix'd by fate's eternal laws
 To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
 No; if this sceptre yet commands the main.

He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd, 375
 Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the wat'ry world,

At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
 Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
 Down rush'd the night; east, west together roar;
 And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore;
 Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd, 381
 And question'd thus his yet-unconquer'd mind:

Wretch that I am! what farther fates attend
 This life of toils, and what my destin'd end?
 Too well alas! the island goddess knew, 385
 On the black sea what perils should ensue.
 New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
 Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes;
 With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?
 What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
 'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears; 391
 Death, present death on ev'ry side appears.
 Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
 Press'd, in Atrides' cause, the Trojan plain:
 Oh! had I died before that well-fought wall; 395
 Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall;
 (Such as was that, when show'rs of jav'ins fled
 From conqu'ring Troy around Achilles dead)
 All Greece had paid me solemn fun'ral then,
 And spread my glory with the sons of men. 400

A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Unwept, unnoted, and for ever dead!

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,
The raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn, 405
Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne:
While by the howling tempest rent in twain
Flew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
Long press'd, he heav'd beneath the weighty wave
Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest Calypso gave: 410
At length emerging, from his nostrils wide
And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide;
E'en then not mindless of his last retreat,
He seiz'd the raft, and leap'd into his seat,
Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood 415
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast
Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blast;
Together clung, it rolls around the field;
So roll'd the float, and so its texture held: 420
And now the south, and now the north, bear
sway,
And now the east the foamy floods obey,
And now the west-wind whirls it o'er the sea.

The wand'ring chief, with toils on toils oppress,
 prest,

Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast: 425

(Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,

But now an azure sister of the main)

Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,

All radiant on the raft the goddess stood;

Then thus address'd him: Thou, whom heav'n

decrees 430

To Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas,

(Unequal contest!) not his rage and pow'r,

Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.

What I suggest thy wisdom will perform:

Forsake thy float, and leave it to the storm; 435

Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave

With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.

To reach Phæacia all thy nerves extend:

There fate decrees thy miseries shall end.

This heav'nly scarf beneath thy bosom bind, 440

And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.

Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,

Return the gift, and cast it in the main;

Observe my orders, and with heed obey,

Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away. 445

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she
rose;

A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling sea.

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd,
He stands suspended, and explores his mind. 451
What shall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
But other gods intend me other woes?
Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine: 455
For scarce in ken appears that distant isle
Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge: while yet the planks sustain
The wild waves' fury, here I fix'd remain;
But when their texture to the tempest yields, 460
I launch advent'rous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus his thoughts an anxious council
hold,
The raging god a wat'ry mountain roll'd; 465
Like a black sheet the whelming billows spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.

Planks, beams, disparted fly: the scatter'd wood
 Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
 So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new-shorn, 470
 Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
 And now a single beam the chief bestrides;
 There, pois'd a while above the bounding tides,
 His limbs discumbers of the clinging vest,
 And binds the sacred cincture round his breast: 475
 Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
 Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas
 along.

All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
 Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous said:

Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay! 480

Go, wander helpless on the wat'ry way:

Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then

(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.

Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise
 Shall last remember'd in thy best of days. 485

This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,
 And reach high Ægæ and the tow'ry dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce earth-shaking
 pow'r,

Jove's daughter, Pallas, watch'd the fav'ring hour,

Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly, 490
 And hush'd the blust'ring brethren of the sky.
 The drier blasts alone of Boreas sway,
 And bear him soft on broken waves away;
 With gentle force impelling to that shore
 Where fate has destin'd he shall toil no more. 495
 And now two nights, and now two days were past,
 Since wide he wander'd on the wat'ry waste;
 Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
 And hourly panting in the arms of death :
 The third fair morn now blaz'd upon the main ; 500
 Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain,
 The winds werē hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
 And a dead silence still'd the wat'ry world.
 When, lifted on a ridgy wave, he spies
 The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes. 505
 As pious children joy with vast delight
 When a lov'd sire revives before their sight,
 (Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
 Fix'd by some dæmon to the bed of pain,
 Till heav'n by miracle his life restore) 510
 So joys Ulysses at th' appearing shore ;
 And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
 The rising forests, and the tufted trees.

And now, as near approaching as the sound
 Of human voice the list'ning ear may wound, 515
 Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
 Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore:
 Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
 To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,
 But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight! 520
 All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
 Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart,
 As thus he commun'd with his soul apart:

Ah me! when o'er a length of waters tost,
 These eyes at last behold th'unhop'd-for coast, 525
 No port receives me from the angry main,
 But the loud deeps demand me back again.
 Above sharp rocks forbid access; around
 Roar the wild waves; beneath, is sea profound!
 No footing sure affords the faithless sand, 530
 To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.
 If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
 Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;
 Or round the island if my course I bend,
 Where the ports open, or the shores descend, 535
 Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
 And bury all my hopes beneath the deep:

Or some enormous whale the god may send
 (For many such on Amphitrite attend):
 Too well the turns of mortal chance I know, 540
 And hate relentless of my heav'nly foe.

While thus he thought, a monstrous wave up-bore
 The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:
 Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
 But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul. 545
 Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
 And stuck adherent, and suspended hung;
 Till the huge surge roll'd off; then, backward sweep
 The reflux tides, and plunge him in the deep.
 As when the polypus, from forth his cave 550
 Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave;
 His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands:
 So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses' hands.
 And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
 Th' unhappy man; e'en fate had been in vain:
 But all-subduing Pallas lent her pow'r, 556
 And prudence sav'd him in the needful hour.
 Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
 (A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
 With longing eyes, observing, to survey 560
 Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.

Between the parting rocks at length he spy'd
 A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
 Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
 And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind. 565
 To this calm port the glad Ulysses press'd,
 And hail'd the river, and its god address'd :

Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream un-
 known

I bend, a suppliant at thy wat'ry throne,
 Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain 570
 To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
 Heav'n hears and pities hapless men like me,
 For sacred e'en to gods is misery:
 Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
 And save a suppliant, and a man distress. 575

He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream sub-
 sides,

Detains the rushing current of his tides,
 Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way,
 And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
 That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore, 580
 He dropp'd his sinewy arms: his knees no more
 Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
 His swol'n heart heav'd; his bloated body swell'd,

From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
 And lost in lassitude lay all the man, 585
 Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
 The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death.
 Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
 The mindful chief Leucothea's scarf unbound;
 Observant of her word, he turn'd aside 590
 His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.
 Behind him far, upon the purple waves
 The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.

Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found
 A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd; 595
 The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground;
 Where on the flow'ry herb as soft he lay,
 Thus to his soul the sage began to say:

What will ye next ordain, ye pōw'rs on high!
 And yet, ah yet, what fates are we to try? 600
 Here by the stream, if I the night outwear,
 Thus spent already, how shall nature bear
 The dews descending, and nocturnal air;
 Or chilly vapours, breathing from the flood
 When morning rises?—If I take the wood, 605
 And in thick shelter of innum'rous boughs
 Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows;

Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be
past,

What savage beasts may wander in the waste?

Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey 610

To prowling bears, or lions in the way.

Thus long debating in himself he stood:

At length he took the passage to the wood,

Whose shady horrors on a rising brow 614

Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.

There grew two olives, closest of the grove,

With roots entwin'd, and branches interwove;

Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd

With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.

Nor here the sun's meridian rays had pow'r, 620

Nor wind sharp piercing, nor the rushing show'r;

The verdant arch so close its texture kept:

Beneath this covert great Ulysses crept.

Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made, 624

(Thick strown by tempest through the bow'ry shade)

Where three at least might winter's cold defy,

Though Boreas rag'd along th' inclement sky.

This store, with joy the patient hero found,

And, sunk amidst 'em, heap'd the leaves around.

As some poor peasant, fated to reside 630

Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,

Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire:
Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
Till Pallas pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes; 635
And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK V.

V. 43. *Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding gods.*] This passage is intricate: why should Jupiter command Ulysses to return without the guidance either of man or god? Ulysses had been just declared the care of heaven, why should he be thus suddenly abandoned? Eustathius answers, that it is spoken solely with respect to the voyage which he immediately undertakes. This indeed shews a reason why this command is given; if he had been under the guidance of a god, the shipwreck (that great incident which brings about the whole catastrophe of the poem) must have been prevented by his power; and as for men, where were they to be procured in a desolate island? What confirms this opinion is, that during the whole shipwreck of Ulysses, there is no interposition of a deity, nor even of Pallas, who used to be his constant guardian; the reason is, because this command of Jupiter forbids all assistance to Ulysses: Leucothea indeed assists him, but it is not till he is shipwrecked. It appears further, that this interdiction respects only the voyage from Ogygia, because Jupiter orders that there shall be no assistance from man, *οτι θεων πομπη, οτ' ανθρωπων*: but Ulysses is transported from Phæacia to Ithaca, *ανθρωπων πομπη*, or by the assistance of the Phæacians, as Eustathius observes; and therefore what Jupiter here speaks has relation only to the present voyage. Dacier understands this to be meant of *any* visible assistance only: but this seems a conclusion; for whether the gods assist visibly or invisibly, the effects are the same; and a deity unseen might have preserved Ulysses from storms, and directly guided him to his own country. But it was necessary for the design of Homer, that Ulysses should not sail directly home; if he had, there had been no room for the relation of his own adventures, and all those surprising narrations

he makes to the Phæacians: Homer therefore, to bring about the shipwreck of Ulysses, withdraws the gods.

V. 45. *Alone, and floating to the wave.*] The word in the original is σχιδιης; νος, as Eustathius observes, is understood: it signifies, continues he, a small vessel made of one entire piece of wood, or a vessel about which little wood is used; it is derived from σχιδον, from being αυτοσχιδιος, συμπεπηχθαι, or compacted together with ease. Heschius defines σχιδια to be μικρα ναυς, η ξυλα α συνδεσσι, και ετω πλεεσι; that is, a small bark, or float of wood which sailors bind together, and immediately use in navigation. This observation appeared to me very necessary, to take off an objection made upon a following passage in this book: the critics have thought it incredible that Ulysses should without any assistance build such a vessel as Homer describes; but if we remember what kind of a vessel it is, it may be reconciled to probability.

V. 46. *Whose haughty line
Is mix'd with gods.*]

The Phæacians were the inhabitants of Scheria, sometimes called Drepanè, afterwards Corcyra, now Corfu, in the possession of the Venetians. But it may be asked in what these people resemble the gods? they are described as a most effeminate nation: whence then this godlike quality? Eustathius answers, that is either from their undisturbed felicity, or from their divine quality of general benevolence: he prefers the latter; but from the general character of the Phæacians, I should prefer the former. Homer frequently describes the gods as αει γεια ζωντες, 'the gods that live in endless ease:' this is suitable to the Phæacians, as will appear more fully in the sequel of the Odyssey. Eustathius remarks, that the poet here gives us in a few lines the heads of the eight succeeding books; and sure nothing can be a greater instance of Homer's art, than his building so noble an edifice upon so small a foundation: the plan is simple and unadorned, but he embellishes it with all the beauties in nature.

V. 56. *The god who mounts the winged winds.*] This is a noble description of Mercury; the verses are lofty and sonorous. Virgil has inserted them in his Æneis, lib. iv. 240.

What is here said of the rod of Mercury, is, as Eustathius observes, an allegory: it is intended to shew the force of eloquence, which has a power to calm, or excite, to raise a passion, or compose it: Mercury is the god of eloquence, and he may very properly be said *θελεγειν, και αυγειειν*, to cool or inflame the passions according to the allegorical sense of these expressions.

V. 64. *So wat'ry fowl.*] Eustathius remarks, that this is a very just allusion; had the poet compared Mercury to an eagle, though the comparison had been more noble, yet it had been less proper; a sea-fowl most properly represents the passage of a deity over the seas; the comparison being adapted to the element.

Some ancient critics marked the last verse *τω κελευς*, &c. with an obelisk, a sign that it ought to be rejected: they thought that the word *οχησατο* did not sufficiently express the swiftness of the flight of Mercury; the word implies no more than 'he was carried:' but this expression is applicable to any degree of swiftness; for where is the impropriety, if we say, Mercury was borne along the seas with the utmost rapidity? The word is most properly applied to a chariot, *επι οχη, ο ιστιν αρμαλος*. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 72. *The nymph he found.*] Homer here introduces an episode of Calypso: and as every incident ought to have some relation to the main design of the poem, it may be asked what relation this bears to the other parts of it? A very essential one: the sufferings of Ulysses are the subject of the Odyssey: here we find him enclosed in an island: all his calamities arise from his absence from his own country: Calypso then, who detains him, is the cause of all his calamities. It is with great judgment that the poet feigns him to be restrained by a deity, rather than a mortal. It might have appeared somewhat derogatory from the prudence and courage of Ulysses, not to have been able by art or strength to have freed himself from the power of a mortal: but by this conduct the poet at once excuses his hero, and aggravates his misfortunes: he is detained involuntarily, but it is a goddess who detains him, and it is no disgrace for a man not to be able to overpower a deity.

What I have here said shews likewise the necessity of this machine of Mercury: it is an established rule of Horace,

‘Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit.’

Calypso was a goddess, and consequently all human means were insufficient to deliver Ulysses. There was therefore a necessity to have recourse to the gods.

V. 80. *The bow'r of Calypso.*] It is impossible for a painter to draw a more admirable rural landscape: the bower of Calypso is the principal figure, surrounded with a shade of different trees: green meadows adorned with flowers, beautiful fountains, and vines loaded with clusters of grapes, and birds hovering in the air, are seen in the liveliest colours in Homer's poetry. But whoever observes the particular trees, plants, birds, &c. will find another beauty of propriety in this description, every part being adapted, and the whole scene drawn agreeable to a country situate by the sea.

V. 155. *Orion.*] The love of Calypso to Ulysses might seem too bold a fiction, and contrary to all credibility, Ulysses being a mortal, she a goddess: Homer therefore, to soften the relation, brings in instances of the like passion in Orion and Iasion; and by this he fully justifies his own conduct, the poet being at liberty to make use of any prevailing story, though it were all fable and fiction.

But why should the death of Orion be here ascribed to Diana; whereas in other places she is said to exercise her power only over women? The reason is, she slew him for offering violence to her chastity; for though Homer be silent about his crime, yet Horace relates it:

‘ Integræ
Tentator Orion Dianæ
Virgineâ domitus sagittâ.’

Eustathius gives another reason why Aurora is said to be in love with Orion. He was a great hunter, as appears from the eleventh book of the Odyssey; and the morning or Aurora is most favourable to those diversions.

V. 161. *Scarce could Iasion, &c.*] Ceres is here understood allegorically, to signify the earth; Iasion was a great husbandman,

and consequently Ceres may easily be feigned to be in love with him: the thunderbolt with which he is slain signifies the excess of heat, which frequently disappoints the hopes of the labourer. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 198. *Absent he lay in her desiring arms.*] This passage has fallen under the severe censure of the critics, they condemn it as an act of conjugal infidelity, and a breach of morality in Ulysses: it would be sufficient to answer, that a poet is not obliged to draw a perfect character in the person of his hero: perfection is not to be found in human life, and consequently ought not be ascribed to it in poetry: neither Achilles nor Æneas are perfect characters; Æneas, in particular, is as guilty, with respect to Dido, in the desertion of her (for Virgil tells us they were married, ‘*connubio jungam stabili*’), as Ulysses can be imagined to be by the most severe critic with respect to Calypso.

But those who have blamed this passage, form their judgments from the morality of these ages, and not from the theology of the ancients: polygamy was then allowed, and even concubinage, without being esteemed any breach of conjugal fidelity; if this be not admitted, the heathen gods are as guilty as the heathen heroes, and Jupiter and Ulysses are equally criminal.

This very passage shews the sincere affection which Ulysses retained for his wife Penelope; even a goddess cannot persuade him to forget her; his person is in the power of Calypso, but his heart is with Penelope. Tully had this book of Homer in his thought when he said of Ulysses, ‘*Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*’

V. 238. *But hear, O earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!*] The oath of Calypso is introduced with the utmost solemnity. Rapin allows it to be an instance of true sublimity. The ancients attested all nature in their oaths, that all nature might conspire to punish their perjuries. Virgil has imitated this passage, but has not copied the full beauty of the original:

‘*Esto nunc sol testis, et hæc mihi terra precanti.*’

It is the remark of Grotius, that the like expression is found in Deuteronomy, ‘*Hear, O ye heavens, the words that I speak, and*

let the earth hear the words of my mouth: Which may almost literally be rendered by this verse of Homer,

ἴστω νῦν τόδε γαῖα, καὶ ὕψανος εὐρύς ὑπερθεύ.

V. 251. *For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains.]* The passion of love is no where described in all Homer, but in this passage between Calypso and Ulysses; and we find that the poet is not unsuccessful in drawing the tender, as well as the fiercer passions. This seemingly trifling circumstance is an instance of it; love delights to oblige, and the least offices receive a value from the person who performs them: this is the reason why Calypso serves Ulysses with her own hands: her damsels attend her, but love makes it a pleasure to her to attend Ulysses. EUSTATHIUS.

Calypso shews more fondness for Ulysses, than Ulysses for Calypso: indeed Ulysses had been no less than seven years in the favour of that goddess; it was a kind of matrimony, and husbands are not altogether so fond as lovers. But the true reason is, a more tender behaviour had been contrary to the character of Ulysses; it is necessary that his stay should be by constraint, that he should continually be endeavouring to return to his own country; and consequently to have discovered too great a degree of satisfaction in any thing during his absence, had outraged his character. His return is the main hinge upon which the whole Odyssey turns, and therefore no pleasure, not even a goddess, ought to divert him from it.

V. 263. *But ah Ulysses! wert thou giv'n to know
What fate yet dooms thee.]*

This is another instance of the tyranny of the passion of love: Calypso had received a command to dismiss Ulysses; Mercury had laid before her the fatal consequences of her refusal, and she had promised to send him away; but her love here again prevails over her reason; she frames excuses still to detain him, and though she dares not keep him, she knows not how to part with him. This is a true picture of nature; love this moment resolves, the next breaks his resolutions: she had promised to send him

ter, in not detaining Ulysses; but she endeavours to persuade Ulysses not to go away.

V. 277. *Though well I see thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love.]*

Ulysses shews great address in this answer to Calypso; he softens the severity of it, by first asking a favourable acceptance of what he is about to say; he calls her his adored goddess, and places Penelope in every degree below the perfections of Calypso. As it is the nature of women not to endure a rival, Ulysses assigns the desire of his return to another cause than the love of Penelope, and ascribes it solely to the love he bears his country. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 311, &c. *Ulysses builds his ship.]* This passage has fallen under censure, as outraging all probability. Rapin believes it to be impossible for one man alone to build so complete a vessel in the compass of four days; and perhaps the same opinion might lead Bossu into mistake, who allows twenty days to Ulysses in building it; he applies the word *ἡξοῖ*, or *twenty*, to the days, which ought to be applied to the trees; *ξηρὰ* is understood, for the poet immediately after declares that the whole was completed in the space of four days; neither is there any thing incredible in the description. I have observed already that this vessel is but *Σχεδία*, a float, or raft; it is true Ulysses cuts down twenty trees to build it; this may seem too great a provision of materials for so small an undertaking: but why should we imagine these to be large trees? The description plainly shews the contrary, for it had been impossible to have felled twenty large trees in the space of four days, much more to have built a vessel proportionable to such materials: but the vessel was but small, and consequently such were the trees. Homer calls these dry trees; this is not inserted without reason, for green wood is unfit for navigation.

Homer in this passage shews his skill in mechanics; a shipwright could not have described a vessel more exactly; but what is chiefly valuable is the insight it gives us to what degree this art of ship-building was then arrived: we find likewise what use navigators made of astronomy in those ages; so that this passage

deserves a double regard, as a fine piece of poetry, and a valuable remain of antiquity.

V. 344. *Ulysses spreads his sails.*] It is observable that the poet passes over the parting of Calypso and Ulysses in silence; he leaves it to be imagined by the reader, and prosecutes his main action. Nothing but a cold compliment could have proceeded from Ulysses, he being overjoyed at the prospect of returning to his country: it was therefore judicious in Homer to omit the relation; and not draw Calypso in tears, and Ulysses in a transport of joy. Besides, it was necessary to shorten the episode: the commands of Jupiter were immediately to be obeyed; and the story being now turned to Ulysses, it was requisite to put him immediately upon action, and describe him endeavouring to re-establish his own affairs, which is the whole design of the *Odyssey*.

V. 355. *Full sev'nte'n nights he cut the foamy way.*] It may seem incredible that one person should be able to manage a vessel seventeen days without any assistance; but Eustathius vindicates Homer by an instance that very much resembles this of Ulysses. A certain Pamphylian being taken prisoner, and carried to Tamiathis (afterwards Damietta) in Egypt, continued there several years; but being continually desirous to return to his country, he pretends a skill in sea affairs: this succeeds, and he is immediately employed in maritime business, and permitted the liberty to follow it according to his own inclination, without any inspection. He made use of this opportunity, and furnishing himself with a sail, and provisions for a long voyage, committed himself to the sea all alone; he crossed that vast extent of waters that lies between Egypt and Pamphylia, and arrived safely in his own country: in memory of this prodigious event he changed his name, and was called *μονοπλευρης*, or the *sole-sailor*; and the family was not extinct in the days of Eustathius.

It may not be improper to observe, that this description of Ulysses sailing alone is a demonstration of the smallness of his vessel; for it is impossible that a large one could be managed by a single person. It is indeed said that twenty trees were taken down for the vessel, but this does not imply that all the trees

were made use of, but only so much of them as was necessary to his purpose.

* V. 360. *Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.*] This expression gives a very lively idea of an island of small extent, that is, of a form more long than large: Aristarchus, instead of *ἔκρυον*, writes *ἐκρυον*, or resembling a *fig*; others tell us, that *ἔκρυον* is used by the Illyrians to signify *αχλὺν*, or a *mist*; this likewise very well represents the first appearance of land to those that sail at a distance; it appears indistinct and confused, or, as it is here expressed, like a mist. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 362. *From Solymé's ærial brow.*] There is some difficulty in this passage. Strabo, as Eustathius observes, affirms that the expression of Neptune's seeing Ulysses from the mountain of Solymé, is to be taken in a general sense, and not to denote the Solymæan mountains in Pisidia, but other eastern mountains that bear the same appellation. In propriety, the Solymæans inhabit the summits of mount Taurus, from Lycia even to Pisidia; these were very distant from the passage of Neptune from the Ethiopians, and consequently could not be the mountains intended by Homer; we must therefore have recourse to the preceding assertion of Strabo, for a solution of the difficulty. Dacier endeavours to explain it another way; who knows, says she, but that the name of Solymæan was anciently extended to all very elevated mountains? Bochart affirms, that the word Solimy is derived from the Hebrew *selem*, or *darkness*: why then might not this be a general appellation? But this is all conjecture, and it is much more probable that such a name should be given to some mountains by way of distinction, and emphatically, from some peculiar and extraordinary quality, than extend itself to all very lofty mountains, which could only introduce confusion and error.

V. 393. *Happy! thrice happy! who in battle slain,
Press'd, in Atrides' cause, the Trojan plain.*]

Plutarch in his *Symposiacs* relates a memorable story concerning Memmius, the Roman general: when he had sacked the city of Corinth, and made slaves of those who survived the ruin of it, he

commanded one of the youths of a liberal education to write down some sentence in his presence, according to his own inclinations. The youth immediately wrote this passage from Homer :

‘ Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
Press’d, in Atreides’ cause, the Trojan plain.’

Memmius immediately burst into tears, and gave the youth and all his relations their liberty.

Virgil has translated this passage in the first book of his *Æneid*. The storm and the behaviour of *Æneas* are copied exactly from it. The storm, in both the poets, is described concisely, but the images are full of terror; Homer leads the way, and Virgil treads in his steps without any deviation. Ulysses falls into lamentation, so does *Æneas*: Ulysses wishes he had found a nobler death, so does *Æneas*: this discovers a bravery of spirit; they lament not that they are to die, but only the inglorious manner of it. This fully answers an objection that has been made both against Homer and Virgil, who have been blamed for describing their heroes with such an air of mean-spiritedness. Drowning was esteemed by the ancients an accursed death, as it deprived their bodies of the rites of sepulture; it is therefore no wonder that this kind of death was greatly dreaded, since it barred their entrance into the happy regions of the dead for many hundreds of years.

V. 397. (*Such as was that, when show’rs of jav’lins fled
From conqu’ring Troy around Achilles dead.*)

These words have relation to an action nowhere described in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. When Achilles was slain by the treachery of Paris, the Trojans made a sally to gain his body, but Ulysses carried it off upon his shoulders, while Ajax protected him with his shield. The war of Troy is not the subject of the *Iliad*, and therefore relates not the death of Achilles; but, as Longinus remarks, he inserts many actions in the *Odyssey* which are the sequel of the story of the *Iliad*. This conduct has a very happy effect; he aggrandizes the character of Ulysses by these short histories, and has found out the way to make him praise himself, without vanity.

V. 440. *This heav'nly scarf beneath thy bosom bind.]* This passage may seem extraordinary, and the poet be thought to preserve Ulysses by incredible means. What virtue could there be in this scarf against the violence of storms? Eustathius very well answers this objection. It is evident that the belief of the power of amulets or charms prevailed in the times of Homer; thus moly is used by Ulysses as a preservative against fascination, and some charm may be supposed to be implied in the zone or cestus of Venus. Thus Ulysses may be imagined to have worn a scarf, or cincture, as a preservative against the perils of the sea. They consecrated anciently votiva, as tablets, &c. in the temples of their gods: so Ulysses, wearing a zone consecrated to Leucothea, may be said to receive it from the hands of that goddess. Eustathius observes, that Leucothea did not appear in the form of a bird, for then how should she speak, or how bring this cincture or scarf? The expression has relation only to the manner of her rising out of the sea, and descending into it; the action, not the person, is intended to be represented. Thus Minerva is said in the Odyssey, 'to fly away,' *ὄρνις ὡς ἀνοίται*, not in the form, but with the swiftness of an eagle. Most of the translators have rendered this passage ridiculously; they describe her in the real form of a sea-fowl, though she speaks, and gives her scarf. So the version of Hobbes:

'She spoke, in figure of a water hen.'

V. 496. *And now two nights, and now two days were past.]* It may be thought incredible that any person should be able to contend so long with a violent storm, and at last survive it: it is allowed that this could scarce be done by the natural strength of Ulysses; but the poet has softened the narration, by ascribing his preservation to the cincture of Leucothea. The poet likewise very judiciously removes Neptune, that Ulysses may not appear to be preserved against the power of that god; and to reconcile it entirely to credibility, he introduces Pallas, who calms the winds and composes the waves, to make way for his preservation.

V. 509. *Fix'd by some dæmon to the bed of pain.]* It was a prevailing opinion among the ancients, that the gods were the

authors of all diseases incident to mankind. Hippocrates himself confesses that he had found some distempers, in which the hand of the gods was manifest, *Θεῶν τι*, as Dacier observes. In this place this assertion has a peculiar beauty, it shews that the malady was not contracted by any vice of the father, but inflicted by an evil dæmon. Nothing is more evident, than that every person was supposed by the ancients to have a good and a bad dæmon attending him; what the Greeks called a dæmon, the Romans named a genius. I confess that this is no where directly affirmed in Homer, but, as Plutarch observes, it is plainly intimated. In the second book of the Iliad the word is used both in a good and bad sense; when Ulysses addresses himself to the generals of the army, he says *Δαίμονις*, in the better sense; and immediately after he uses it to denote a coward,

Δαίμονι' ἀτρεφίας ἥτορ.

This is a strong evidence, that the notion of a good and bad dæmon was believed in the days of Homer.

V. 550. *As when the polypus.*] It is very surprising to see the prodigious variety with which Homer enlivens his poetry: he rises or falls as his subject leads him, and finds allusions proper to represent an hero in battle, or a person in calamity. We have here an instance of it; he compares Ulysses to a polypus; the similitude is suited to the element, and to the condition of the person. It is observable, that this is the only full description of a person shipwrecked in all his poems: he therefore gives a loose to his imagination, and enlarges upon it very copiously. There appears a surprising fertility of invention through the whole of it: in what a variety of attitudes is Ulysses drawn, during the storm, and at his escape from it? His soliloquies in the turns of his condition, while he is sometimes almost out of danger, and then again involved in new difficulties, engage our hopes and fears. He ennobles the whole by his machinery, and Neptune, Pallas, and Leucothea interest themselves in his safety or destruction. He has likewise chosen the most proper occasion for a copious description; there is leisure for it. The proposition of the poem requires him to describe a man of sufferings in the person of

Ulysses: he therefore no sooner introduces him, but he throws him into the utmost calamities, and describes them largely, to shew at once the greatness of his distress, and his wisdom and patience under it. In what are the sufferings of Æneas in Virgil comparable to those of Ulysses? Æneas suffers little personally in comparison of Ulysses, his incidents have less variety, and consequently less beauty. Homer draws his images from nature, but embellishes those images with the utmost art and fruitfulness of invention.

V. 578. *Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way.*] Such passages as these are bold yet beautiful. Poetry animates every thing, and turns rivers into gods. But what occasion is there for the intervention of this river-god to smooth the waters, when Pallas had already composed both the seas and the storms? The words in the original solve the objection, *πρὸς δὲ αὐτὸν ὡμαίνετο γαλήνην*, or, 'smoothed the way before him,' that is, his own current: the actions therefore are different; Pallas gives a general calmness to the sea, the river-god to his own current.

V. 630. *As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours.]*

Homer is very happy in giving dignity to low images. What can be more unpromising than this comparison, and what more successfully executed? Ulysses, in whom remains as it were but a spark of life, the vital heat being extinguished by the shipwreck, is very justly compared to a brand, that retains only some small remains of fire; the leaves that cover Ulysses, are represented by the embers, and the preservation of the fire all night, paints the revival of his spirits by the repose of the night; the expression,

..... 'Fated to reside
Remote from neighbours.'

is not added in vain; it gives, as Eustathius further observes, an air of credibility to the allusion, as if it had really been drawn from some particular observation; a person that lives in a desert being obliged to such circumstantial cares, where it is impossible to have a supply, for want of neighbours, Homer literally calls

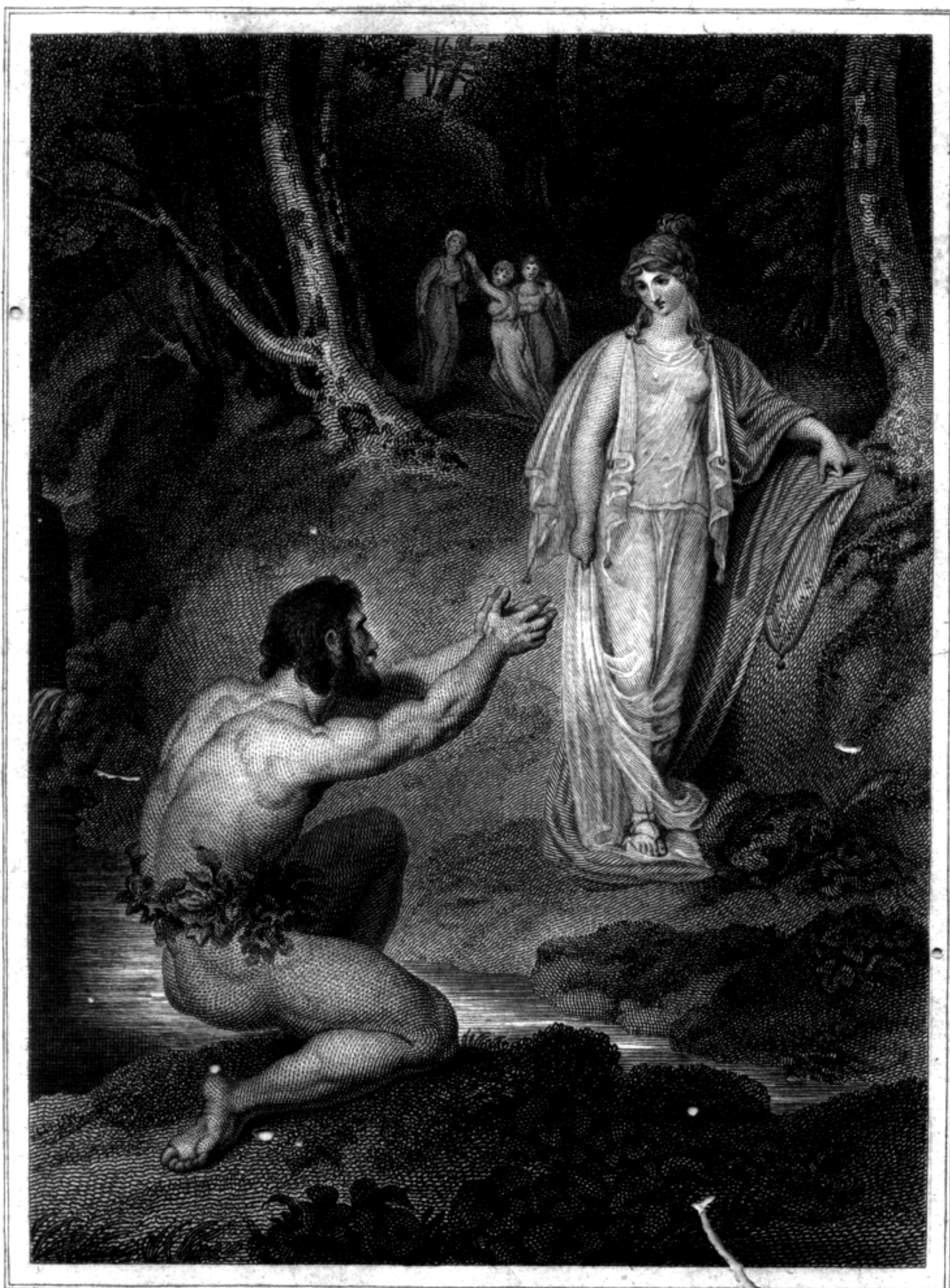
these remains 'the seeds of fire:' Æschylus, in his Prometheus, calls a spark of fire *πυρρος πηγὴν*, or, 'a fountain of fire;' less happily in my judgment, the ideas of fire and water being contradictory.

The Conclusion.] This book begins with the seventh day, and comprehends the space of twenty-five days; the first of which is taken up in the message of Mercury, and interview between Calypso and Ulysses; the four following in the building of the vessel; eighteen before the storm, and two after it. So that one and thirty days are completed, since the opening of the poem.

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

PALLAS appearing in a dream to Nausicaa (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phæacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation to her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.



Drawn by R.^d Westall R.A.

Engraved by Ja.^s Stow

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BOOK VI.

WHILE thus the weary wand'rer sunk to rest,
And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast,
The martial maid from heav'n's aërial height
Swift to Phæacia wing'd her rapid flight.

In elder times the soft Phæacian train
In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
A lawless nation of gigantic foes;
Then great Nausithous from Hyperia far,
Through seas retreating from the sound of war, 10
The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head:
There, round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd;
To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd:
Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds,
And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their
bounds. . • 16

Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
And wise Alcinous held the regal sway.

To his high palace through the fields of air
The goddess shot; Ulysses was her care. 20

There as the night in silence roil'd away,
 A heav'n of charms divine Nausicaa lay:
 Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze:
 Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a grace.
 Light as the viewless air, the warrior-maid 25
 Glides thro' the valves, and hovers round her head;
 A fav'rite virgin's blooming form she took,
 From Dymas sprung, and thus the vision spoke:

Oh indolent! to waste thy hours away!
 And sleep'st thou careless of the bridal day? 30
 Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
 Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise!
 A just applause the cares of dress impart,
 And give soft transport to a parent's heart.
 Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way, 35
 When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:
 Haste to the stream! companion of thy care,
 Lo, I thy steps attend, thy labours share.
 Virgin, awake! the marriage hour is nigh,
 See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs
 sigh! 40

The royal car at early dawn obtain,
 And order mules obedient to the rein,
 For rough the way, and distant rolls the day,
 Where their fair vests Phæacian virgins lave.

In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great,
And majesty derives a grace from state. 46

Then to the palaces of heav'n she sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales;
The seat of gods; the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease. 50

There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose!
The firmament with living splendours glows.
Hither the goddess wing'd th' aërial way, 55
Through heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her rosy car Aurora shed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
Uprose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night. 60

The queen she sought: the queen her hours bestow'd
In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.
Meanwhile Phæacia's peers in council sat: 65
From his high dome the king descends in state,
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach'd him passing, and submissive said:

Will my dread sire his ear regardful deign,
 And may his child the royal car obtain? 70
 Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way,
 Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?
 A dignity of dress adorns the great,
 And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.
 Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day, 75
 And spotless robes become the young and gay:
 So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
 By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.

Thus she: but blushes ill-restrain'd betray
 Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day. 80
 The conscious sire the dawning blush survey'd,
 And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid:
 My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
 That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.

Swift at the royal nod th' attending train 85
 The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
 The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares
 Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.
 The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
 The sumptuous viands, and the flav'rous wines. 90
 The train prepare a cruise of curious mould,
 A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;

Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.

Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins 95
Shine in her hand: along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.
They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;
Where, gath'ring into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.
The mules unharness'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

Then emulous the royal robes they lave, 105
~~And~~ plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave;
(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand)
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil; 110
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play
(Their shining veils unbound). Along the skies
Tost, and retest, the ball incessant flies.
They sport, they feast; Nausicaa lifts her voice, 115
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heav'n rejoice.

As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
 Or wide Táygetus' resounding groves;
 A silvan train the huntress-queen surrounds,
 Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds: 120
 Fierce in the sport, along the mountain's brow
 They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe:
 High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,
 Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace;
 Distinguish'd excellence the goddess proves; 125
 Exults Latona, as the virgin moves.
 With equal grace Nausicaa trod the plain,
 And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.

Meantime (the care and fav'rite of the skies)
 Wrapt in embow'ring shade, Ulysses lies, ~~130~~
 His woes forgot! but Pallas now addrest
 To break the bands of all-composing rest.
 Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
 The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,
 And swam the stream: loud shrieks the virgin-train,
 And the loud shriek redoubles from the main. 136
 Wak'd by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
 And to the deaf woods wailing, breath'd his woes:

Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
 On what new region is Ulysses tost: 140

Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms;
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores:
The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bow'rs,
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood: 145
Or azure daughters of the silver flood;
Or human voice? but, issuing from the shades,
Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous
bends

With forceful strength a branch the hero rends;
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.

As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts and wet with wint'ry show'rs,
Descends terrific from the mountain's brow: 155
With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow;
With conscious strength elate, he bends his way
Majestically fierce, to seize his prey
(The steer or stag); or with keen hunger bold
Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold. 160
No less a terror, from the neighb'ring groves
(Rough from the tossing surge) Ulysses moves;
Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms;
The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.

Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry 165
 To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly;
 All but the nymph: the nymph stood fix'd alone,
 By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.

Meantime in dubious thought the king awaits,
 And self-consid'ring, as he stands, debates; 170
 Distant his mournful story to declare,
 Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
 But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
 At awful distance he accosts the maid:

 If from the skies a goddess, or if earth 175
 (Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
 To thee I bend! if in that bright disguise
 Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,
 Hail, Dian, hail! the huntress of the groves
 So shines majestic, and so stately moves, 180
 So breathes an air divine! But if thy race
 Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
 Bless'd is the father from whose loins you sprung,
 Bless'd is the mother at whose breast you hung,
 Bless'd are the brethren who thy blood divide, 185
 To such a miracle of charms allied:
 Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
 When stately in the dance you swim th' harmo-
 nious maze.

But bless'd o'er all, the youth with heav'nly charms,
 Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms! 190
 Never, I never view'd till this bless'd hour
 Such finish'd grace! I gaze and I adore!
 Thus seems the palm with stately honours crown'd
 By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;
 The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast, 195
 I voyag'd, leader of a warrior-host,
 But ah how chang'd! from thence my sorrow flows;
 O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!)
 Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
 With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd: 200
 Raptur'd I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
~~Plant~~ so stately, or a nymph so fair.
 Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
 For misery, O queen, before thee stands!
 Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
 To roaring billows, and the warring wind; 206
 Heav'n bade the deep to spare! but heav'n, my foe,
 Spares only to inflict some mightier woe!
 Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms;
 Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms! 210
 Once more I view the face of human kind:
 O let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind!

Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless on a foreign land.

Propitious to my wants, a vest supply 215

To guard the wretched from th' inclement sky:
So may the gods who heav'n and earth controul,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed;
Bless'd with a husband be thy bridal bed; 220
Bless'd be thy husband with a blooming race,
And lasting union crown your blissful days.

The gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
Firm union on their favourites below:
Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate; 225
The good exult, and heav'n is in our state. —

To whom the nymph: O stranger, cease thy
care.

Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good suffers, while the bad prevails: 230
Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of Jove;
Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from
above.

But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,

To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide— 235

Know, the Phæacian tribes this land divide;

From great Alcinous' royal loins I spring,

A happy nation, and a happy king.

Then to her maids—Why, why, ye coward train,

These fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain.

Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,

'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread:

Safe in the love of heav'n, an ocean flows

Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;

'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve, 245

Cheer the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.

By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,

And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.

Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs

Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.

Obedient to the call, the chief they guide 251

To the calm current of the secret tide;

Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,

A vest and robe, with rich embroid'ry gay;

Then unguents in a vase of gold supply, 255

That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy sky.

To them the king: No longer I detain

Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin-train!

Retire, while from my wearied limbs I lave
 The foul pollution of the briny wave: 260
 Ye gods! since this worn frame refection knew,
 What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view?
 But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
 To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
 Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide: 266
 O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
 And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
 The balmy oil, a fragrant show'r, he sheds;
 Then, dress'd, in pomp magnificently treads. 270
 The warrior-goddess gives his frame to shine
 With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine:
 Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
 His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
 As by some artist to whom Vulcan gives 275
 His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
 By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mould,
 And o'er the silver pours the fusil gold:
 So Pallas his heroic frame improves
 With heav'nly bloom, and like a god he moves.
 A fragrance breathes around: majestic grace 281
 Attend his steps: th'astonish'd virgins gaze.

Soft he reclines along the murm'ring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.

The wond'ring nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said: 286

Not without care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy: his steps some godhead leads:
Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driv'n
Far from this realm, the fav'rite isle of heav'n.
Late a sad spectacle of woe he trod 291

The desart sands, and now he looks a god.

O heav'n! in my connubial hour decree.

This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!

But haste, the viands, and the bowl provide— 295

The maids the viands, and the bowl supply'd:

Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,

And with the gen'rous vintage thirst assuag'd.

Now on return her care Nausicaa bends,
The robes resumes, the glitt'ring car ascends, 300
Far-blooming o'er the field: and as she press'd
The splendid seat, the list'ning chief address'd:

Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day,

Lo, to the palace I direct thy way:

Where in high state the nobles of the land 305

Attend my royal sire, a radiant band.

But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
 Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides:
 Advance at distance, while I pass the plain
 Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:
 Alone I reascend—With airy mounds 311
 A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
 The jutting land two ample bays divides;
 Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides:
 The spacious basins arching rocks enclose, 315
 A sure defence from ev'ry storm that blows.
 Close to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
 And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,
 Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to store,
 Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar: 320
 For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
 But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
 Or teach the flutt'ring sail to float in air.
 They rush into the deep with eager joy, 325
 Climb the steep surge, and thro' the tempest fly;
 A proud, unpolish'd race—To me belongs
 The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues;
 Lest malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
 Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name:

'What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads?
 Heav'ns! with what graceful majesty he treads?
 Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
 The future consort of her bridal hour;
 Or rather, some descendant of the skies; 335
 Won by her pray'r, th' aërial bridegroom flies.
 Heav'n on that hour its choicest influence shed,
 That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
 All, all the godlike worthies that adorn
 This realm, she flies; Phæacia is her scorn.' 340

And just the blame; for female innocence
 Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th' offence:
 Th' unguarded virgin, as unchaste, I blame;
 And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
 Till our consenting sires a spouse provide, 345
 And public nuptials justify the bride.

But wouldst thou soon review thy native plain?
 Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:
 Nigh where a grove with verdant poplars crown'd,
 To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground, 350
 We bend our way: a bubbling fount distills
 A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills;
 Around the grove a mead with lively green
 Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;

Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours; 355
 And there the garden yields a waste of flow'rs.
 Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
 Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.
 There wait embow'r'd, while I ascend alone
 To great Alcinous on his royal throne. 360
 Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
 And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
 The lofty palace overlooks the town,
 From ev'ry dome by pomp superior known; 364
 A child may point the way. With earnest gait
 Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state;
 Her royal hand a wond'rous work designs;
 Around a circle of bright damsels shines,
 Part twist the threads, and part the wool dispose,
 While with the purple orb the spindle glows. 370
 High on a throne, amid the Scherian pow'rs,
 My royal father shares the genial hours;
 But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose,
 With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
 So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore, 375
 Though mountains rise between, and oceans roar.

She added not, but waving as she wheel'd
 The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:

With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
 Slow rolls the car before th' attending train. 380

Now whirling down the heav'ns, the golden day
 Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray;
 The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
 To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd: 384

Daughter of Jove! whose arms in thunder wield
 Th'avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield;
 Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid
 When booming billows clos'd above my head:
 Attend, unconquer'd maid! accord my vows,
 Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes. 390

This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
 (By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky:
 Stern god! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
 Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK VI.

V. 12. *Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head.*] The Phæacians having a great share in the succeeding parts of the Odyssey, it may not be improper to enlarge upon their character. Homer has here described them very distinctly: he is to make use of the Phæacians to convey Ulysses to his country, he therefore by this short character gives the reader such an image of them, that he is not surprised at their credulity and simplicity, in believing all those fabulous recitals which Ulysses makes in the progress of the poem. The place likewise in which he describes them is well chosen; it is before they enter upon action, and by this method we know what to expect from them, and see how every action is naturally suited to their character.

Bossu observes that the poet has inserted this verse with great judgment: Ulysses, says he, knew that the Phæacians were simple and credulous; and that they had all the qualities of a lazy people, who admire nothing so much as romantic adventures; he therefore pleases them by recitals suited to their own humour: but even here the poet is not unmindful of his more understanding readers; and the truth intended to be taught by way of moral is, that a soft and effeminate life breaks the spirit, and renders it incapable of many sentiments or actions.

Plutarch seems to understand this verse in a different manner: he quotes it, in his Dissertation upon Banishment (to shew that Nausithoos made his people happy though he left his own country, and settled them far from the commerce of mankind, *καὶ ἀνδρῶν ἀλφειστῶν*), without any particular view to the Phæacians; which was undoubtedly intended by Homer, those words being a kind of a preface to their general character.

This Phæacia of the ancients is the island now called Corfu.

The inhabitants of it were a colony of the Hyperians. Eustathius remarks, that it has been a question whether Hyperia were a city or an island; he judges it to be a city: it was infested by the Cyclops; but they had no shipping, as appears from the ninth of the Odyssey, and consequently, if it had been an island, they could not have molested the Phæacians; he therefore concludes it to be a city, afterwards called Camarina in Sicily.

Mr. Barnes has here added a verse that is not to be found in any other edition; and I have rendered it in the translation.

V. 31. *Thy spousal ornament neglected lies ;
Arise, prepare the bridal train. . . .]*

Here is a remarkable custom of antiquity. Eustathius observes, that it was usual for the bride to give changes of dress to the friends of the bridegroom at the celebration of the marriage, and Homer directly affirms it. Dacier quotes a passage in Judges concerning Samson's giving changes of garments at his marriage feast, as an instance of the like custom amongst the Israelites; but I believe, if there was such a custom at all amongst them, it is not evident from the passage alledged: nothing is plainer, than that Samson had not given the garments, if his riddle had not been expounded: nay, instead of giving, he himself had received them, if it had not been interpreted. I am rather of opinion that what is said of Samson has relation to another custom amongst the ancients, of proposing an enigma at festivals, and adjudging a reward to him that solved it. These the Greeks called γρίφος συμπόλιος; 'griphos convivales:' Athenæus has a long dissertation about this practice in his tenth book, and gives a number of instances of the enigmatical propositions in use at Athens, and of the forfeitures and rewards upon the solution and non-solution of them; and Eustathius in the tenth book of the Odyssey comes into the same opinion. So that if it was a custom amongst the Israelites as well as Greeks, to give garments (as it appears to be to give other gifts), this passage is no instance of it: it is indeed a proof that the Hebrews as well as Greeks had a custom of entertaining themselves at their festivals, with these 'griphi convivales:' I therefore believe that these changes of garments were no

more than rewards or forfeits, according to the success of the interpretation.

V. 35. *Haste, to the limpid stream*] This passage has not escaped the raillery of the critics; Homer, say they, brings the goddess of wisdom down from heaven, only to advise Nausicaa to make haste to wash her clothes against her wedding: what necessity is there for a conduct so extraordinary upon so trivial an occasion? Eustathius sufficiently answers the objection, by observing that the poet very naturally brings about the safety of Ulysses by it; the action of the washing is the means, the protection of Ulysses the end of the descent of that goddess; so that she is not introduced lightly, or without contributing to an important action: and it must be allowed, that the means made use of are very natural; they grow out of the occasion, and at once give the fable a poetical turn, and an air of probability.

It has been further objected, that the poet gives an unworthy employment to Nausicaa, the daughter of a king; but such critics form their idea of ancient from modern greatness: it would be now a meanness to describe a person of quality thus employed, because custom has made it the work of persons of low condition: it would now be thought dishonourable for a lady of high station to attend the flocks; yet we find in the most ancient history extant, that the daughters of Laban and Jethro, persons of power and distinction, were so employed, without any dishonour to their quality. In short, these passages are to be looked upon as exact pictures of the old world, and consequently as valuable remains of antiquity.

V. 41. *The royal car obtain.*] It would have been an impropriety to have rendered *αμαξαρ* by the word chariot; Homer seems industriously to avoid *αγμα*, but constantly uses *απνν*, or *αμαξα*: this car was drawn by mules; whereas, observes Eustathius, the chariot, or *αγμα*, was proper only for horses. The word car takes in the idea of any other vehicle, as well as of a chariot.

This passage has undergone a very severe censure, as mean and ridiculous, chiefly from the expressions to her father after-

wards, *υψηλόν, ευκυκλόν*: which being rendered, 'high and round,' disgrace the author: no person, I believe, would ask a father to lend his high and round car; nor has Homer said it: Eustathius observes, that *ευκυκλόν* is the same as *ευτροχος, κυκλα λεγούται οι τροχοι*, or wheels; and that *υπερβρία*, is *το επικειμενον τετραγωνον πλινθιον τω αξονι*, or the quadrangular body of the car that rests upon the axle of it; this fully answers the criticism: Nausicaa describes the car so particularly, to distinguish it from a chariot, which had been improper for her purpose: the other part of the objection, concerning the roundness of the car, is a mistake in the critic; the word having relation to the wheels, and not to the body of it, which, as Eustathius observes, was quadrangular.

V. 61. *the queen her hours bestow'd*

In curious works.]

This is another image of ancient life: we see a queen amidst her attendants at work at the dawn of day, 'de nocte surrexit, et digiti ejus apprehenderant fusum.' This is a practice as contrary to the manners of our ages, as the other of washing the robes: it is the more remarkable in this queen, because, she lived amongst an idle effeminate people, that loved nothing but pleasures. Dacier.

V. 88. *Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.*] It is not without reason that the poet describes Nausicaa carrying the whole wardrobe of the family to the river: he inserts these circumstances so particularly, that she may be able to clothe Ulysses in the sequel of the story: he further observes the modesty and simplicity of those early times, when the whole dress of a king and his family (who reigned over a people that delighted in dress) is without gold: for we see Nausicaa carries with her all the habits that were used at the greatest solemnities; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been washed. Eustathius.

V. 101. *Where gath'ring into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.]*

It is evident, that the ancients had basins, or cisterns, continually supplied by the rivers for this business of washing; they were

called, observes Eustathius, *πλαυνοί*, or *βαθροί*; and were sometimes made of marble, other times of wood. Thus in the Iliad, book 22,

‘ Each gushing fount a marble cistern fills,
Whose polish’d bed receives the falling rills,
Where Trojan dames, ere yet alarm’d by Greece,
Wash’d their fair garments in the days of peace.’

The manner of washing was different from what is now in use: they trod them with their feet, *στρίβον, ἐτρίβον τοὺς ποσὶ*. EUSTATHIUS.

It may be thought that these customs are of small importance, and of little concern to the present ages: it is true; but time has stamped a value upon them: like ancient medals, their intrinsic worth may be small, but yet they are valuable, because images of antiquity.

V. 117. *When o’er Erymanth Diana roves.*] This is a very beautiful comparison (and whenever I say any thing in commendation of Homer, I should always be understood to mean the original). Virgil was sensible of it, and inserted it in his poem:

‘ Qualis in Eurœ ripis, aut per juga Cynthi,
Exercet Diana choros; quam mille secutæ
Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades: illa pharetram
Fert humero, gradiensque deas supereminet omnes:
Latonæ tacitum pertentat gaudia pectus.’

It has given occasion for various criticisms, with relation to the beauty of the two authors.

V. 133. *Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
The various ball]*

The play with the ball was called *φσνις*, and *σφαιριδα*, by the ancients, and from the signification of the word, which is *deception*, we may learn the nature of the play: the ball was thrown to some one of the players unexpectedly, and he as unexpectedly threw it to some other of the company to catch, from which surprise upon one another it took the name of *φσνις*. It was a sport much in use among the ancients, both men and women; it

caused a variety of motions in throwing and running, and was therefore a very healthful exercise. The Lacedæmonians were remarkable for the use of it: Alexander the Great frequently exercised at it; and Sophocles wrote a play, called Πανήρις, or Lotrices; in which he represented Nausicaa sporting with her damsels at this play: it is not now extant.

Dionysidorus gives us a various reading; instead of σφαίραν περιτ' ἔρριψε, he writes it, πάλαν περιτ', which the Latins render *ωλον*; and Suidas countenances the alteration, for he writes that a damsel named Larissa, as she sported at this play (*ωλον*, not σφαίρη), was drowned in the river Peneus. EUSTATHIUS.

What I would further observe is, the art of the poet in carrying on the story: he proceeds from incident to incident very naturally, and makes the sports of these virgins contribute to the principal design of the poem, and promote the re-establishment of Ulysses, by discovering him advantageously to the Phæacians. He so judiciously interweaves these sports into the texture of the story, that there would be a chasm if they were taken away; and the sports of the virgins are as much of a piece with the whole, as any of the labours of Ulysses.

The poet reaps a further advantage from this conduct: it beautifies and enlivens the poem with a pleasant and entertaining scene, and relieves the reader's mind by taking it off from a continual representation of horror and sufferings in the story of Ulysses: he himself seems here to take breath, and indulging his fancy, lets it run out into several beautiful comparisons, to prepare the reader to hear with a better relish the long detail of the calamities of his hero, through the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

V. 151. *Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.*]

This passage has given great offence to the critics. The interview between Ulysses and Nausicaa, says Rapin, outrages all the rules of decency: she forgets her modesty, and betrays her virtue, by giving too long an audience: she yields too much to his complaints, and indulges her curiosity too far at the sight of a person in such circumstances. But perhaps Rapin is too severe; Homer

has guarded every circumstance with as much caution as if he had been aware of the objection: he covers his loins with a broad foliage (for Eustathius observes, that *πλεῖον* signifies *πλατὺς*, or a broad branch), he makes Ulysses speak at a proper distance, and introduces Minerva to encourage her virgin modesty. Is there here any outrage of decency? Besides, what takes off this objection of immodesty in Nausicaa, is, that the sight of a naked man was not unusual in those ages; it was customary for virgins of the highest quality to attend heroes to the bath, and even to assist in bathing them, without any breach of modesty; as is evident from the conduct of Polycaste in the conclusion of the third book of the Odyssey, who bathes and perfumes Telemachus. If this be true, the other objections of Rapsinⁿ about her yielding too much to his complaints, &c. are of no weight; but so many testimonies of her virtuous and compassionate disposition, which induces her to pity and relieve calamity. Yet it may seem that the other damsels had a different opinion of this interview, and that through modesty they ran away, while Nausicaa alone talks with Ulysses: but this only shews, not that she had less modesty, but more prudence, than her retinue. The damsels fled not out of modesty, but fear of an enemy: whereas Nausicaa wisely reflects that no such person could arrive there, the country being an island; and from his appearance, she rightly concluded him to be a man in calamity. This wisdom is the Pallas in the allegory, which makes her to stay when the other damsels fly for want of equal reflection. Adam and Eve covered themselves after the same manner as Ulysses.

V. 153. *As when a lion in the midnight hours.*] This is a very noble comparison, yet has not escaped censure: it has been objected that it is improper for the occasion, as bearing images of too much terror, only to fright a few timorous virgins, and that the poet is unseasonably sublime. This is only true in burlesque poetry, where the most noble images are frequently assembled to disgrace the subject, and to shew a ridiculous disproportion between the allusion and the principal subject; but the same reason will not hold in epic poetry, where the poet raises a low circum-

stance into dignity by a sublime comparison. The simile is not introduced merely to shew the impression it made upon the virgins, but paints Ulysses himself in very strong colours: Ulysses is fatigued with the tempests and waves; the lion with winds and storms: it is hunger that drives the lion upon his prey; an equal necessity compels Ulysses to go down to the virgins: the lion is described in all his terrors, Ulysses arms himself as going upon an unknown adventure; so that the comparison is very noble and very proper. This verse in particular has something horrible in the very run of it,

Σμερδαλέῃ δ' αὐτοῖσι φανη κεκακωμένῃ ἄλμῃ.

Dionysius Halicarnassus, in his observations upon the placing of words, quotes it to this purpose: when Homer, says he, is to introduce a terrible or unusual image, he rejects the more flowing and harmonious vowels, and makes choice of such mutes and consonants as load the syllables, and render the pronunciation difficult.

Pausanias writes in his Atticks, that the famous painter Polygnotus painted this subject in the gallery at Athens. Εγραφε δὲ καὶ πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ ταῖς ὁμῇ πᾶσι Νηυσταῖς ἐφισταμένον Ὀδυσσεῖα; he painted Ulysses approaching Nausicaa and her damsels, as they were washing at the river. This is the same Polygnotus who painted in the gallery called ποικίλη, the battle of Marathon gained by Miltiades over the Medes and Persians.

V. 175. *If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend!*

There never was a more agreeable and insinuating piece of flattery, than this address of Ulysses; and yet nothing mean appears in it, as is usual in almost all flattery. The only part that seems liable to any imputation, is that exaggeration at the beginning, of calling her a goddess; yet this is proposed with modesty and doubt, and hypothetically. Eustathius assigns two reasons why he resembles her to Diana, rather than to any other deity; either because he found her and her damsels in a solitary place, such as

Diana is supposed to frequent with her rural nymphs; or perhaps Ulysses might have seen some statue or picture of that goddess, to which Nausicaa bore a likeness. Virgil (who has imitated this passage) is more bold, when without any doubt or hesitation, before he knew Venus, he pronounces the person with whom he talks, O Dea, certè.

V. 187. *Joyful they see applauding princes gaze.*] In the original there is a false construction; for after σφισι θυμός ιαίνεται, Ulysses uses λευσσόντων, whereas it ought to be λευσσει; but this disorder is not without its effect, it represents the modest confusion with which he addresses Nausicaa; he is struck with a religious awe at the sight of her (for so σέβας properly signifies), and consequently naturally falls into a confusion of expression; this is not a negligence, but a beauty. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 198. *Thus seems the palm.*] This allusion is introduced to image the stateliness, and exactness of shape in Nausicaa, to the mind of the reader; and so Tully, as Spondanus observes, understands it. Cicero, 1. de legibus. ‘Aut quod Homericus Ulysses Deli se proceram et teneram palmam vidisse dixit, hodie monstrant eandem.’ Pliny also mentions this palm, lib. xiv. cap. 44. ‘Necnon palmæ Deli ab ejusdem Dei ætate conspiciuntur.’ The story of the palm is this: When Latona was in travail of Apollo in Delos, the earth that instant produced a large palm, against which she rested in her labour. Homer mentions it in his Hymns:

Κεκλιμένη
 Ἀλχόδατῳ φοινικῷ.

And also Callimachus:

Λυσάλο δὲ ζώνην, ἀπο δ' ἐκλίθη ἐμπαλιν ὤμοις
 φοινικῷ ποτὶ πρῆμον. And again,

... ἐπεφύσεν ὁ Δηλῖος ἄδυ τι φοινῖξ
 Ἐξαπίνης.

This allusion is after the Oriental manner. Thus in the Psalms, how frequently are persons compared to cedars? And in the same author, children are resembled to olive-branches.

This palm was much celebrated by the ancients; the superstition of the age had given it a religious veneration, and even in the times of Tully the natives esteemed it immortal (for so the above-mentioned words imply). This gives weight and beauty to the address of Ulysses; and it could not but be very acceptable to a young lady, to hear herself compared to the greatest wonder in the creation.

Dionysius Halicarnassus observes the particular beauty of these two verses:

Δηλὸν δὴ ποῖε τοιῶν Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῶν,
Φοῖνιξ ἔργον ἔργον ἀνερχομένον ἐγὼ σῶα.

When Homer, says he, would paint an elegance of beauty, or represent any agreeable object, he makes use of the smoothest vowels and most flowing semivowels, as in the lines last recited: he rejects harsh sounds, and a collision of rough words; but the lines flow along with a smooth harmony of letters and syllables, without any offence to the ear by asperity of sound.

V. 198. *O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!*] There is some obscurity in this passage: Ulysses speaks in general, and does not specify what voyage he means. It may therefore be asked how is it to be understood? Eustathius answers, that the voyage of the Greeks to the Trojan expedition is intended by the poet; for Lycophron writes, that the Greeks sailed by Delos in their passage to Troy.

Homer passes over the voyage in this transient manner without a further explanation: Ulysses had no leisure to enlarge upon that story, but reserves it more advantageously for a future discovery before Alcinous and the Phæacian rulers. By this conduct he avoids a repetition, which must have been tedious to the reader, who would have found little appetite afterwards, if he had already been satisfied by a full discovery made to Nausicaa. The obscurity therefore arises from choice, not want of judgment.

V. 242. *'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread.*] This I take to be the meaning of the word *διερός*, which Eustathius explains by *ζων καὶ εὐρυσθενος*, 'vividus et valens;' or, 'he shall not be long-lived.' But it may be asked how this character of valour,

in destroying their enemies, can agree with the Phæacians, an effeminate unwarlike nation? Eustathius answers, that the protection of the gods is the best defence, and upon this Nausicaa relies. But then it is necessary that man should co-operate with the gods; for it is in vain to rely upon the gods for safety, if we ourselves make not use of means proper for it: whereas the Phæacians were a people wholly given up to luxury and pleasures. The true reason then of Nausicaa's praise of the Phæacians may perhaps be drawn from that honourable partiality, and innate love which every person feels for his country. She knew no people greater than the Phæacians, and having ever lived in full security from enemies, she concludes that it is not in the power of enemies to disturb that security.

V. 247. *By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.]*

This is a very remarkable passage, full of such a pious generosity as the wisest teach, and the best practise. I am sensible it may be understood two ways; and in both it bears an excellent instruction. The words are, 'the poor and stranger are from Jove, and a small gift is acceptable to them, or acceptable to Jupiter,' Διφιλην. I have chosen the latter, in conformity to the eastern way of thinking: 'He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord,' as it is expressed in the Proverbs.

V. 263. *But, nymphs, recede! &c.]* This place seems contradictory to the practice of antiquity, and other passages in the Odyssey: nothing is more frequent than for heroes to make use of the ministry of damsels in bathing, as appears from Polycaste and Telemachus, &c. Whence is it then that Ulysses commands the attendants of Nausicaa to withdraw while he bathes? Spondanus is of opinion, that the poet intended to condemn an indecent custom of those ages solemnly by the mouth of so wise a person as Ulysses: but there is no other instance in all his works to confirm that conjecture. I am at a loss to give a better reason, unless the difference of the places might make an alteration in the action. It is possible that in baths prepared for public use there might be some convenience to defend the person who bathed in

some degree from observation, which might be wanting in an open river, so that the action might be more indecent in the one instance than in the other, and consequently occasion these words of Ulysses: but this is a conjecture, and submitted as such to the reader's better judgment.

V. 265. *at once into the tide*

Active he bounds]

It may be asked why Ulysses prefers the river waters in washing, to the waters of the sea, in the *Odyssey*; whereas in the tenth book of the *Iliad*, after the death of Dolon, Diomed and Ulysses prefer the sea waters to those of the river? There is a different reason for this different regimen: in the *Iliad*, Ulysses was fatigued, and sweated with the labours of the night, and in such a case the sea waters being more rough are more purifying and corroborating: but here Ulysses comes from the seas, and (as Plutarch in his *Symposiacks* observes upon this passage) *the more subtle and light particles exhale by the heat of the sun, but the rough and the saline stick to the body, till washed away by fresh waters.*

V. 271. *The warrior-goddess gives his frame to shine.*] Poetry delights in the marvellous, and ennoble the most ordinary subjects by dressing them with poetical ornaments, and giving them an adventitious dignity. The foundation of this fiction, of Ulysses receiving beauty from Pallas, is only this: the shipwreck and sufferings of Ulysses had changed his face and features, and his long fasting given him a pale and sorrowful aspect; but being bathed, perfumed, and dressed in robes, he appears another man, full of life and beauty. This sudden change gave Homer the hint to improve it into a miracle; and he ascribes it to Minerva, to give a dignity to his poetry. He further embellishes the description by a very happy comparison.

V. 293. *O heav'n! in my connubial hour decree,*

This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!]

This passage has been censured as an outrage against modesty and credibility; is it probable that a young princess should fall in love with a stranger at first sight? and if she really falls in love,

is it not an indecent passion? I will lay before the reader the observations of Plutarch upon it: 'If Nausicaa, upon casting her eyes upon this stranger, and feeling such a passion for him as Calypso felt, talks thus out of wantonness, her conduct is blameable: but if, perceiving his wisdom by his prudent address, she wishes for such an husband, rather than a person of her own country who had no better qualifications than singing, dancing, and dressing, she is to be commended. This discovers no weakness, but prudence, and a true judgment. She deserves to be imitated by the fair sex, who ought to prefer a good understanding before a fine coat, and a man of worth before a good dancer.

Besides, it may be offered in vindication of Nausicaa, that she had in the morning been assured by a vision from heaven, that her nuptials were at hand; this might induce her to believe that Ulysses was the person intended by the vision for her husband; and his good sense and prudent behaviour, as Dacier observes, might make her wish it, without any imputation of immodesty.

V. 313. *The jutting land two ample bays divides;*

Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides.]

This passage is not without its difficulty: but the scholiast upon Dionysius Periegetes gives us a full explication of it: *Δυο λιμένας ἔχει ἡ φαίαις, τὸν μὲν Ἀλκίνοῦ, τὸν δὲ Ὑλλου, διό φησι Καλλίμαχος ἀμφιδυμὸς φαίαξ;* the island of Phæacia has two ports, the one called the port of Alcinous, the other of Hyllus; thus Callimachus calls it the place of two ports. And Apollonius, for the same reason, calls it *ἀμφιλιπύργος*, or the place which is entered by two ports. DACIER.

V. 325. *They rush into the deep with eager joy.]* It is very judicious in the poet to let us thus fully into the character of the Phæacians, before he comes to shew what relation they have to the story of the Odyssey: he describes Alcinous and the people of better rank as persons of great hospitality and humanity; this gives an air of probability to the free and benevolent reception which Ulysses found: he describes the vulgar as excellent navigators; and he does this, not only because they are islanders, but, as Eustathius observes, to prepare the way for the return of

Ulysses, who was to be restored by their conduct to his country, even against the inclination of Neptune, the god of the ocean. But it may be asked, is not Homer inconsistent with himself, when he paints the Phæacians as men of the utmost humanity, and immediately after calls them a proud unpolished race, and given up to censoriousness? It is easy to reconcile the seeming contradiction, by applying the character of humanity to the higher rank of the nation, and the other to the vulgar and the mariners. I believe the same character holds good to this day amongst any people who are much addicted to sea affairs; they contract a roughness, by being secluded from the more general converse of mankind, and consequently are strangers to that affability which is the effect of a more enlarged conversation. But what is it that inclines the Phæacians to be censorious? It is to be remembered, that they are every where described as a people abandoned to idleness; to idleness therefore that part of their character is to be imputed. When the thoughts are not employed upon things, it is usual to turn them upon persons: a good man has not the inclination, an industrious man not the leisure, to be censorious; so that censure is the property of idleness. This I take to be the moral intended to be drawn from the character of the Phæacians.

V. 344. . . . the least freedom with the sex is shame,
Till our consenting sires a spouse provide.]

This is an admirable picture of ancient female life among the Orientals; the virgins were very retired, and never appeared amongst men but upon extraordinary occasions, and then always in the presence of the father or mother: but when they were married, says Eustathius, they had more liberty. Thus Helen converses freely with Telemachus and Pisistratus, and Penelope sometimes with the suitors. Nausicaa delivers her judgment sententiously, to give it more weight; what can be more modest than these expressions? and yet they have been greatly traduced by Mons. Perrault, a French critic; he translates the passage so as to imply that 'Nausicaa disapproves of a virgin's lying with a man, without the permission of her father, before marriage;'

ανδρασι μισεσθαι led him into this mistake, which is sometimes used in such a signification, but here it only means conversation: if the word *μισεσθαι* signified more than keeping company, it would be more ridiculous, as Boileau observes upon Longinus, than Perrault makes it: for it is joined to *ανδρασι*, and then it would infer that Nausicaa disapproves of a young woman's lying with 'several men' before she was married, without the licence of her father. The passage, continues Boileau, is full of honour and decency: Nausicaa has a design to introduce Ulysses to her father; she tells him she goes before to prepare the way for his reception, but that she must not be seen to enter the city in his company, for fear of giving offence, which a modest woman ought not to give: a virtuous woman is obliged not only to avoid immodesty, but the appearance of it; and for her part she could not approve of a young woman keeping company with men without the permission of her father or mother, before she was married. Thus the indecency is not in Homer, but in the critic: it is indeed, in Homer, an excellent lecture of modesty and morality.

V. 347. *But wouldst thou soon review thy native plain?*] Eustathius and Dacier are both of opinion, that Nausicaa had conceived a passion for Ulysses: I think this passage is an evidence that she rather admired and esteemed, than loved him; for it is contrary to the nature of the passion to give directions for the departure of the person beloved, but rather to invent excuses to prolong his stay. It is true Nausicaa had wished, in the foregoing parts of this book, that she might have Ulysses for her husband, or such an husband as Ulysses: but this only shews that she admired his accomplishments; nor could she have added 'such a spouse as he,' at all, if her affections had been engaged and fixed upon Ulysses only. This likewise takes off the objection of a too great fondness in Nausicaa; for it might have appeared too great a fondness to have fallen in love at the first with an absolute stranger.

V. 373. *But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose.*] This little circumstance, seemingly of small importance, is not without its beauty. It is natural for a daughter to apply to the mo-

compassionate nature, and therefore the poet first interests the queen in the cause of Ulysses. At the same time he gives a pattern of conjugal affection, in the union between Arete and Alcinous.

V. 391. *but forbore to fly*
(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky.]

We see the ancients held a subordination among the deities, and though different in inclinations, yet they act in harmony: one god resists not another deity. This is more fully explained, as Eustathius observes, by Euripides, in his Hippolytus; where Diana says, it is not the custom of the gods to resist one the other, when they take vengeance even upon the favourites of other deities. The late tempest that Neptune had raised for the destruction of Ulysses, was an instance of Neptune's implacable anger: this makes Minerva take such measures as to avoid an open opposition, and yet consult the safety of Ulysses: she descends, but it is secretly.

This book takes up part of the night, and the whole thirty-second day; the vision of Nausicaa is related in the preceding night, and Ulysses enters the city a little after the sun sets in the following evening. So that thirty-two days are completed since the opening of the poem.

This book in general is full of life and variety: it is true, the subject of it is simple and unadorned, but improved by the poet, and rendered entertaining and noble. The muse of Homer is like his Minerva, with respect to Ulysses, who from an object of commiseration improves his majesty, and gives a grace to every feature.

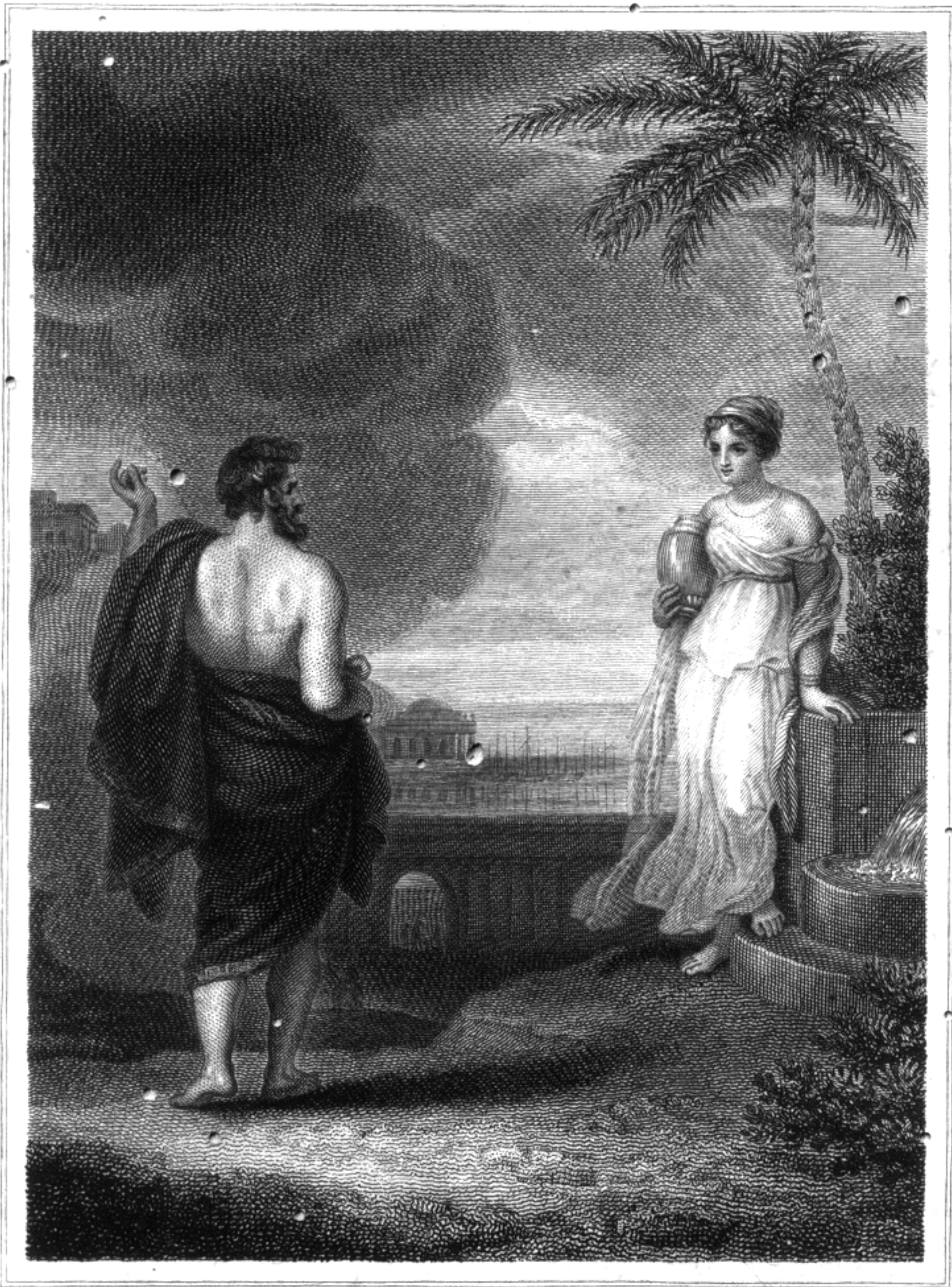
THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE COURT OF ALCINOUS.

THE princess Nausicaa returns to the city, and Ulysses soon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young virgin, who guides him to the palace, and directs him in what manner to address the queen Arete. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The palace and gardens of Alcinous described. Ulysses falling at the feet of the queen, the mist disperses, the Phæacians admire, and receive him with respect. The queen inquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypso, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues, and the book ends with the night.



Painted by Rob^t Smirke R.A.

Engraved by Ja^s Stow

BOOK VII.

THE patient heav'nly man thus suppliant pray'd;
While the slow mules draw on th' imperial maid:
Thro' the proud street she moves, the public gaze:
The turning wheel before the palace stays.
With ready love her brothers gath'ring round, 5
Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.
She seeks the bridal bow'r: a matron there
The rising fire supplies with busy care,
Whose charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
Now worn with age, Eurymedusa nam'd: 10
The captive dame Phæacian rovers bore,
Snatch'd from Epirus, her sweet native shore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom bestow'd
On good Alcinous, honour'd as a god:
Nurse of Nausicaa from her infant years, 15
And tender second to a mother's cares.

Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
To town Ulysses took the winding way.
Propitious Pallas, to secure her care,
round him spread a veil of thicken'd air; 20

To shun th' encounter of the vulgar crowd,
 Insulting still, inquisitive and loud.

When near the fam'd Phæacian walls he drew,
 The beauteous city op'ning to his view,
 His step a virgin met, and stood before: 25
 A polish'd urn the seeming virgin bore,
 And youthful smil'd; but in the low disguise
 Lay hid the goddess with the azure eyes.

Show me, fair daughter (thus the chief demands),
 The house of him who rules these happy lands. 30
 Through many woes and wand'rings, lo! I come
 To good Alcinous' hospitable dome.
 Far from my native coast, I rove alone,
 A wretched stranger, and of all unknown!

The goddess answer'd: Father, I obey, 35
 And point the wand'ring traveller his way:
 Well known to me the palace you inquire,
 For fast beside it dwells my honour'd sire;
 But silent march, nor greet the common train
 With question needless, or inquiry vain. 40

A race of rugged mariners are these;
 Unpolish'd men, and boist'rous as their seas:
 The native islanders alone their care,
 And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.

These did the ruler of the deep ordain 45
 To build proud navies, and command the main;
 On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way;

No bird so light, no thought so swift as they.

Thus having spoke, th' unknown celestial leads:

The footsteps of the deity he treads, 50
 And secret moves along the crowded space,
 Unseen of all the rude Phæacian race.

(So Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes
 The mist objected, and condens'd the skies)

The chief with wonder sees th' extended streets,
 The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets; 56

He next their princes' lofty domes admires,
 In sep'rate islands crown'd with rising spires;
 And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,
 That gird the city like a marble zone. 60

At length the kingly palace gates he view'd:

There stopt the goddess, and her speech renew'd:

My task is done; the mansion you inquire,

Appears before you: enter, and admire.

High-thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt behold
 The sceptred rulers. Fear not, but be bold: 66

A decent boldness ever meets with friends,

Succeeds, and e'en a stranger recommends.

First to the queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
 Alcinous' queen, Arete is her name, 70
 The same her parents, and her pow'r the same.
 For know, from Ocean's god Nausithous sprung,
 And Peribæa, beautiful and young:
 (Eurymedon's last hope, who rul'd of old
 The race of giants, impious, proud, and bold; 75
 Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
 Perish'd the prince, and left this only heir)
 Who now by Neptune's am'rous pow'r compress'd,
 Produc'd a monarch that his people bless'd,
 Father and prince of the Phæacian name; 80
 From him Rhexenor and Alcinous came.
 The first by Phœbus' burning arrows fir'd,
 New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.
 No son surviv'd: Arete heir'd his state,
 And her, Alcinous chose his royal mate. 85
 With honours yet to womankind unknown,
 This queen he graces, and divides the throne:
 In equal tenderness her sons conspire,
 And all the children emulate their sire.
 When thro' the street she gracious deigns to move,
 (The public wonder, and the public love) 91
 The tongues of all with transport sound her praise,
 The eyes of all, as on a goddess, gaze.

She feels the triumph of a gen'rous breast,
 To heal divisions, to relieve th' opprest; 95
 In virtue rich; in blessing others, blest.

Go then secure, thy humble suit prefer,
 And owe thy country and thy friends to her.

With that the goddess deign'd no longer stay,
 But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way: 100
 Forsaking Scheria's ever-pleasing shore,
 The winds to Marathon the virgin bore;
 Thence, where proud Athens rears her tow'ry head,
 With op'ning streets and shining structures spread,
 She pass'd, delighted with the well-known seats;
 And to Erectheus' sacred dome retreats. 106

Meanwhile Ulysses at the palace waits,
 There stops, and anxious with his soul debates,
 Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.
 The front appear'd with radiant splendours gay,
 Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day. 111
 The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
 Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:
 Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;
 The pillars silver, on a brazen base; 115
 Silver the lintels deep-projecting o'er,
 And gold, the ringlets that command the door.

Two rows of stately dogs, on either hand,
 In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.
 These Vulcan form'd with art divine, to wait 120
 Immortal guardians at Alcinous' gate;
 Alive each animated frame appears,
 And still to live beyond the pow'r of years.
 Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,
 Where various carpets with embroid'ry blaz'd, 125
 The work of matrons: these the princes press'd,
 Day following day, a long-continued feast.
 Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
 Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;
 The polish'd ore, reflecting ev'ry ray, 130
 Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.
 Full fifty handmaids form the household train;
 Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain;
 Some ply the loom; their busy fingers move
 Like poplar leaves, when Zephyr fans the grove.
 Not more renown'd the men of Scheria's isle, 135
 For sailing arts and all the naval toil,
 Than works of female skill their women's pride,
 The flying shuttle through the threads to guide:
 Pallas to these her double gifts imparts, 140
 Inventive genius, and industrious arts.

Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies.

Four acres was th' allotted space of ground,

Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around: 145

Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould;

The red'ning apple ripens here to gold:

Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,

With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,

The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,

And verdant olives flourish round the year. 151

The balmy spirit of the western gale

Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:

Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,

On apples apples, figs on figs arise: 155

The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,

The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,

With all th' united labours of the year:

Some to unload the fertile branches run, 160

Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun,

Others to tread the liquid harvest join,

The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.

Here are the vines in early flow'r descry'd,

Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side, 165

And there in autumn's richest purple dy'd.

Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous order terminate the scene.

Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect
crown'd;

This through the gardens leads its streams around,
Visits each plant, and waters all the ground; 171
While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
And thence its current on the town bestows:
To various use their various streams they bring,
The people one, and one supplies the king. 175

Such were the glories which the gods ordain'd,
To grace Alcinous, and his happy land!
E'en from the chief, who men and nations knew,
Th' unwonted scene surprise and rapture drew;
In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er, 180
Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.

Night now approaching, in the palace stand,
With goblets crown'd, the rulers of the land;
Prepar'd for rest, and off'ring to the god
Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod. 185

Unseen he glided through the joyous crowd,
With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud,
Direct to great Alcinous' throne he came,
And prostrate fell before th' imperial dame.

Then from around him drop'd the veil of night;
Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight. 191

The nobles gaze, with awful fear opprest;
Silent they gaze, and eye the godlike guest.

Daughter of great Rhexenor! (thus began,
Low at her knees, the much-induring man) 195
To thee, thy consort, and this royal train,
To all that share the blessings of your reign,
A suppliant bends: O pity human woe!
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.

A wretched exile to his country send, 200
Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.
So may the gods your better days increase,
And all your joys descend on all your race;
So reign for ever on your country's breast,
Your people blessing, by your people blest! 205

Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the ashes took his place.
Silence ensu'd. The eldest first began,
Echeneus sage, a venerable man!
Whose well-taught mind the present age surpast,
And join'd to that th' experience of the last. 211
Fit words attended on his weighty sense,
And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.

Oh sight (he cried) dishonest and unjust!
 A guest, a stranger, seated in the dust! 215
 To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground
 Befits a monarch. Lo! the peers around
 But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace;
 And seat him fair in some distinguish'd place.
 Let first the herald due libation pay 220
 To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way;
 Then set the genial banquet in his view,
 And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.
 His sage advice the list'ning king obeys;
 He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise,
 And from his seat Laodamas remov'd, 226
 (The monarch's offspring, and his best belov'd)
 There next his side the godlike hero sat;
 With stars of silver shone the bed of state.
 The golden ew'r a beauteous handmaid brings, 230
 Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs,
 Whose polish'd vase with copious streams supplies
 A silver laver, of capacious size.
 The table next in regal order spread,
 The glitt'ring canisters are heap'd with bread:
 Viands of various kinds invite the taste, 236
 Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!

Thus feasting high, Alcinous gave the sign,

And bade the herald pour the rosy wine.

Let all around the due libation pay 240

To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way.

He said. Pontonus heard the king's command:

The circling goblet moves from hand to hand:

Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man.

Alcinous then, with aspect mild, began: 245

Princes and peers, attend! while we impart

To you the thoughts of no inhuman heart.

Now pleas'd and satiate from the social rite

Repair we to the blessings of the night:

But with the rising day, assembled here, 250

Let all the elders of the land appear,

Pious observe our hospitable laws,

And heav'n propitiate in the stranger's cause:

Then join'd in council, proper means explore

Safe to transport him to the wish'd-for shore: 255

(How distant that, imports not us to know, •

Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe)

Meantime, nor harm nor anguish let him bear:

This interval, heav'n trusts him to our care;

But to his native land our charge resign'd, 260

Heav'n's is his life to come, and all the woes behind.

Then must he suffer what the fates ordain;
 For fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
 And twins e'en from the birth, are misery and man!

But if descended from th' Olympian bow'r,
 Gracious approach us some immortal pow'r; 266
 If in that form thou com'st a guest divine,
 Some high event the conscious gods design.
 As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
 The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest; 270
 Then manifest of heav'n the vision stood,
 And to our eyes familiar was the god.
 Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
 And shine before him all the desert way:
 With social intercourse, and face to face, 275
 The friends and guardians of our pious race.
 So near approach we their celestial kind,
 By justice, truth, and probity of mind;
 As our dire neighbours of Cyclopæan birth 279
 Match in fierce wrong the giant-sons of earth.

Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
 The prudent Greek) possess the royal mind.
 Alas! a mortal, like thyself, am I;
 No glorious native of yon azure sky:
 In form, ah how unlike their heav'nly kind? 235
 How more inferior in the gifts of mind?

Alas, a mortal! most oppress'd of those
 Whom fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
 By a sad train of miseries alone
 "Distinguish'd long, and second now to none! 290
 By heav'n's high will compell'd from shore to shore;
 "With heav'n's high will prepar'd to suffer more.
 What histories of toil could I declare?
 But still long-wearied nature wants repair;
 "Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast,
 My craving bowels still require repast. 296
 Howe'er the noble, suff'ring mind, may grieve
 Its load of anguish, and disdain to live;
 "Necessity demands our daily bread;
 Hunger is insolent, and will be fed. 300
 But finish, O ye peers! what you propose,
 And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes:
 Pleas'd will I suffer all the gods ordain,
 To see my soil, my son, my friends, again.
 That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise
 With ever-during shade these happy eyes! 306
 Th'assembled peers with gen'ral praise approv'd
 His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.
 Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
 And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs. 310

Ulysses in the regal walls alone
 Remain'd : beside him, on a splendid throne,
 Divine Arete and Alcinous shone.

The queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd
 Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;
 Not without wonder seen. Then thus began, 316
 Her words addressing to the godlike man:

Can'st thou not hither, wond'rous stranger! say,
 From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea?
 Tell then whence art thou? whence that princely air?
 And robes like these, so recent and so fair? 321

Hard is the task, O princess! you impose,
 (Thus sighing spoke the man of many woes)
 The long, the mournful series to relate
 Of all my sorrows, sent by heav'n and fate! 325
 Yet what you ask, attend. An island lies
 Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,
 Ogygia nam'd, in Ocean's wat'ry arms;
 Where dwells Calypso, dreadful in her charms!
 Remote from gods or men she holds her reign,
 Amid the terrors of the rolling main. 331
 Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore
 Unbless'd! to tread that interdicted shore,
 When Jove tremendous in the sable deeps
 Launch'd his red lightning at our scatter'd ships:

Then, all my fleet, and all my followers lost, 336
 Sole on a plank, on boiling surges tost,
 Heav'n drove my wreck th' Ogygian isle to find,
 Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
 Met by the goddess there with open arms, 340
 She brib'd my stay with more than human charms;
 Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
 Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
 But all her blandishments successless prove,
 To banish from my breast my country's love. 345
 I stay reluctant sev'n continu'd years,
 And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
 The eighth, she voluntary moves to part,
 Or urg'd by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
 A raft was form'd to cross the surging sea; 350
 Herself supplied the stores and rich array;
 And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
 In sev'nteen days appear'd your pleasing coast,
 And woody mountains half in vapours lost.
 Joy touch'd my soul: my soul was joy'd in vain,
 For angry Neptune rous'd the raging main; 356
 The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar;
 The splitting raft the furious tempest tore;
 And storms vindictive intercept the shore.

Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave 360
 With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
 To reach this isle: but there my hopes were lost,
 The surge impell'd me on a craggy coast.
 I chose the safer sea, and chanc'd to find
 A river's mouth, impervious to the wind, 365
 And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood;
 Then took the shelter of the neighb'ring wood.
 'Twas night; and cover'd in the foliage deep,
 Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.
 All night I slept, oblivious of my pain: 370
 Aurora dawn'd, and Phœbus shin'd in vain,
 Nor till oblique he stop'd his ev'ning ray,
 Had Somnus dried the balmy dew away.
 Then female voices from the shore I heard:
 A maid amidst them, goddess-like, appear'd: 375
 To her I su'd, she pitied my distress;
 Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.
 Who from such youth could hope consid'rate care?
 In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!
 She gave me life, reliev'd with just supplies 380
 My wants, and lent these robes that strike your
 eyes.

This is the truth: and oh ye pow'rs on high!
 Forbid that want should sink me to a lie.

To this the king: Our daughter but exprest
 Her cares imperfect to our godlike guest, 385
 Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
 Why not herself did she conduct the way,
 And with her handmaids to our court convey?

Hero and king! (Ulysses thus replied)
 Nor blame her, faultless, nor suspect of pride: 390
 She bade me follow in th' attendant train;
 But fear and rev'rence did my steps detain,
 Lest rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:
 Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.

Far from my soul (he cried) the gods efface
 All wrath ill grounded, and suspicion base! 396
 Whate'er is honest, stranger, I approve;
 And would to Phœbus, Pallas, and to Jove,
 Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
 Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son: 400
 In such alliance couldst thou wish to join,
 A palace stor'd with treasures should be thine,
 But if reluctant, who shall force thy stay?
 Jove bids to set the stranger on his way,
 And snips shall wait thee with the morning ray.
 Till then, let slumber close thy careful eyes; 406
 The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies,
 And seize the moment when the breezes rise:

Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,
 Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more. 410
 Far as Eubæa though thy country lay,
 Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.
 Thither of old, Earth's giant-son to view,
 On wings of winds with Rhadamanth they flew:
 This land, from whence their morning course be-
 gun, 415

Saw them returning with the setting sun.
 Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
 Our youth how dext'rous, and how fleet our sail,
 When justly, tim'd with equal sweep they row,
 And ocean whitens in long tracks below. 420

Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
 But thus to heav'n (and heav'nward lifts his eyes):
 O Jove! O father! what the king accords
 Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!
 Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory shine; 425
 Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!

Meantime Arete, for the hour of rest
 Ordains the fleecy couch, and cov'ring vest:
 Bids her fair train the purple quilts preparê,
 And the thick carpets spread with busy care. 430
 With torches blazing in their hands they past,
 And finish'd all their queen's command with haste:

Then gave the signal to the willing guest:
He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest,
There, soft-extended, to the murm'ring sound 435
Of the high porch, Ulysses sleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares Alcinous lies;
And fast beside, were clos'd Arete's eyes.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK VII.

THIS book opens with the introduction of Ulysses to Alcinous; every step the poet takes carries on the main design of the poem, with a progress so natural, that each incident seems really to have happened, and not to be invention. Thus Nausicaa accidentally meets Ulysses, and introduces him to Alcinous her father, who lands him in Ithaca: it is possible this might be true history; the poet might build upon a real foundation, and only adorn the truth with the ornaments of poetry. It is to be wished, that a faithful history of the Trojan war, and the voyages of Ulysses, had been transmitted to posterity; it would have been the best comment upon the Iliad and Odyssey. We are not to look upon the poems of Homer as mere romances, but as true stories, heightened and beautified by poetry: thus the Iliad is built upon a real dissention, that happened in a real war between Greece and Troy; and the Odyssey upon the real voyages of Ulysses, and the disorders that happened through his absence in his own country. Nay, it is not impossible but that many of those incidents that seem most extravagant in Homer, might have an appearing truth, and be justified by the opinions and mistaken credulity of those ages. What is there in all Homer more seemingly extravagant, than the story of the race of the Cyclopes, with one broad eye in their foreheads? and yet, as sir Walter Raleigh very judiciously conjectures, this may be built upon a seeming truth: they were a people of Sicily remarkable for savageness and cruelty, and perhaps might in their wars make use of a head-piece or vizor, which had but one sight in it; and this might give occasion to sailors who coasted those shores to mistake the single sight of the vizor for a broad eye in the fore-

head, especially when they before looked upon them as monsters for their barbarity. I doubt not but we lose many beauties in Homer for want of a real history, and think him extravagant, when he only complies with the opinions of former ages. I thought it necessary to make this observation, as a general vindication of Homer; especially in this place, immediately before he enters upon the relation of those stories which have been thought most to outrage credibility: if then we look upon the *Odyssey* as all fiction, we consider it unworthily; it ought to be read as a story founded upon truth, but adorned with the embellishments of poetry, to convey instruction with pleasure the more effectually.

V. 10. *Eurymedusa nam'd.*] Eustathius remarks, that the Phæacians were people of great commerce, and that it was customary in those ages to exchange slaves in traffick; or perhaps Eurymedusa might be a captive, piracy then being honourable, and such seizures of cattle or slaves frequent. The passage concerning the brothers of Nausicaa has not escaped the censure of the critics: Homer in the original calls them, 'like gods,' and yet in the same breath gives them the employment of slaves; they unyoke the mules, and carry into the palace the burdens they brought. A two-fold answer may be given to this objection; and this conduct might proceed from the general custom of the age, which made such actions reputable; or from the particular love the brothers bore their sister, which might induce them to act thus, as an instance of it.

V. 20. *Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air.*] It may be asked what occasion there is to make Ulysses invisible? Eustathius answers, not only to preserve him from insults as he was a stranger, but that he might raise a greater surprise in Alcinoüs by his sudden appearance. But, adds he, the whole is an allegory; and Ulysses wisely choosing the evening to enter unobserved, gave occasion to the poet to bring in the goddess of wisdom to make him invisible.

V. 26. *The seeming virgin, &c.*] It may be asked why Minerva does not appear as a goddess, but in a borrowed form? The poet has already told us, that she dreaded the wrath

of Neptune; one deity could not openly oppose another deity, and therefore she acts thus invisibly.

V. 47. *On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way.*] This circumstance is not inserted without a good effect: it could not but greatly encourage Ulysses to understand that he was arrived amongst a people that excelled in navigation; this gave him a prospect of being speedily conveyed to his own country, by the assistance of a nation so expert in maritime affairs. **EUSTATHIUS.**

V. 63. *My task is done, &c.*] As deities ought not to be introduced without a necessity, so, when introduced, they ought to be employed in acts of importance, and worthy of their divinity: it may be asked if Homer observes this rule in this episode, where a goddess seems to appear only to direct Ulysses to the palace of Alcinous, which, as he himself tells us, a child could have done? but the chief design of Minerva was to advise Ulysses in his present exigencies: and (as Eustathius remarks) she opens her speech to him with great and noble sentiments. She informs him how to win the favour of Alcinous, upon which depends the whole happiness of her hero; and by which she brings about his establishment in his kingdom, the aim of the whole *Odyssey*. Virgil makes use of the same method in his *Æneis*, and Venus there executes the same office for her son, as Minerva for her favourite, in some degree as a guide, but chiefly as a counsellor.

V. 74. *Eurymedon, &c.*] This passage is worthy observation, as it discovers to us the time when the race of the ancient giants perished; this Eurymedon was grandfather to Nausithous, the father of Alcinous; so that the giants were extirpated forty or fifty years before the war of Troy. This exactly agrees with ancient story, which informs us, that Hercules and Theseus purged the earth from those monsters. Plutarch in his life of Theseus tells us, that they were men of great strength, and public robbers, one of whom was called the Bender of Pines. Now Theseus stole away Helen in her infancy, and consequently these giants were destroyed some years before the Trojan expedition. **DACIER, PLUTARCH.**

. 84, &c. *Arete.*] It is observable that this Arete was both

wife and niece to Alcinous, an instance that the Græcians married with such near relations: the same appears from Demosthenes and other Greek orators. But what then is the notion of incest amongst the ancients? The collateral branch was not thought incestuous, for Juno was the wife and sister of Jupiter. Brothers likewise married their brothers' wives, as Deiphobus Helen, after the death of Paris: the same was practised amongst the Jews, and consequently, being permitted by Moses, was not incestuous. So that the only incest was in the ascending, not collateral or descending branch; as when parents and children married: thus when Myrrha lay with her father, and Lot with his daughters, this was accounted incest. The reason is very evident; a child cannot pay the duty of a child to a parent, and at the same time of a wife or husband; nor can a father act with the authority of a father towards a person who is at once his wife and daughter. The relations interfere, and introduce confusion, where the law of nature and reason requires regularity.

V. 95. *To heal divisions, &c.*] This office of Arete has been looked upon as somewhat extraordinary, that she should decide the quarrels of the subjects, a province more proper for Alcinous; and therefore the ancients endeavoured to soften it by different readings; and instead of *οἰσιν τ' ευφρονησει*, they inserted *νοσιν τ' ευφρονησει*, or 'she decides amongst women.' Eustathius in the text reads it in a third way, *νοσιν τ' ευφροσυνησει*, or 'by her wisdom.' Spondanus believes, that the queen had a share in the government of the Phæacians; but Eustathius thinks the poet intended to set the character of Arete in a fair point of light, she bearing the chief part in this book, and a great share in the sequel of the Odyssey; by this method he introduces her to the best advantage, and makes her a person of importance, and worthy to have a place in heroic poetry: and indeed he has given her a very amiable character.

V. 109. *Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates*] The poet here opens a very agreeable scene, and describes the beauty of the palace and gardens of Alcinous. Diodorus Siculus adapts this passage to the island Taprobane: Justin Martyr to Paradise; *Τὴ Παράδεισον δὲ εἰκόνα τοῦ Ἀλκίνοῦ κτήσαν σφύζειν πεποίηκε.* He trans-

cribes this whole passage into his Apology, but with some variation from the common editions, for instead of

..... αλλα μαλ' αει

Ζεφυρον ωνειεσσι, he reads,

αλλ' αει αυτη Ζεφυρον, &c. perhaps more elegantly.

Eustathius observes that Homer suits his poetry to the things he relates, for in the whole Iliad there is not a description of this nature, nor an opportunity to introduce it in a poem that represents nothing but objects of terror and blood. The poet himself seems to go a little out of the way to bring it into the Odyssey; for it has no necessary connexion with the poem, nor would it be less perfect if it had been omitted; but as Mercury, when he surveyed the Power of Calypso, ravished with the beauty of it, stood a while in a still admiration; so Homer, delighted with the scenes he draws, stands still a few moments, and suspends the story of the poem, to enjoy the beauties of these gardens of Alcinous. But even here he shews his judgment, in not letting his fancy run out into a long description: he concludes the whole in the compass of twenty verses, and resumes the thread of his story. Rabin, I confess, censures this description of the gardens: he calls it puerile, and too light for eloquence; that it is spun out to too great a length, and is somewhat affected; has no due coherence with, nor bears a just proportion to, the whole, by reason of its being too glittering. This is spoken with too great severity: it is necessary to relieve the mind of the reader sometimes with gayer scenes, that it may proceed with a fresh appetite to the succeeding entertainment. In short, if it be a fault, it is a beautiful fault; and Homer may be said here, as he was upon another occasion by St. Augustin, to be 'dulcissimè vanus.' The admiration of the gold and silver is no blemish to Ulysses: for, as Eustathius remarks, it proceeds not out of avarice, but from the beauty of the work, and usefulness and magnificence of the buildings. The whole description, continues he, suits the character of the Phæacians, a proud, luxurious people, delighted with shew and ostentation.

V. 118. *Two rows of stately dogs, &c.*] We have already seen

that dogs were kept as a piece of state, from the instance of those that attended Telemachus: here Alcinous has images of dogs in gold, for the ornament of his palace; Homer animates them in his poetry; but to soften the description, he introduces Vulcan, and ascribes the wonder to the power of a god. If we take the poetical dress away, the truth is, that these dogs were formed with such excellent art, that they seemed to be alive, and Homer, by a liberty allowable to poetry, describes them as really having that life, which they only have in appearance. In the Iliad he speaks of living tripods with greater boldness. Eustathius recites another opinion of some of the ancients, who thought these *Kυνες* not to be animals, but a kind of large nails (*πλῆγες*) or pins, made use of in buildings; and to this day the name is retained by builders, as dogs of iron, &c. It is certain the words will bear this interpretation, but the former is more after the spirit of Homer, and more noble in poetry. Besides, if the latter were intended, it would be absurd to ascribe a work of so little importance to a deity.

V. 124. *Fair thrones within, &c.*] The poet does not say of what materials these thrones were made, whether of gold or silver, to avoid the imputation of being thought fabulous in his description; it being almost incredible, remarks Eustathius, that such quantities of gold and silver could be in the possession of such a king as Alcinous; though, if we consider that his people were greatly given to navigation, the relation may come within the bounds of credibility.

V. 128. *Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,*

Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd.]

This is a remarkable piece of grandeur: lamps, as appears from the eighteenth of the Odyssey, were not at this time known to the Grecians, but only torches: these were held by images in the shape of beautiful youths, and those images were of gold.

V. 135. *Like poplar leaves when Zephyr fans the grove.*]

There is some obscurity in this short allusion, and some refer it to the work, others to the damsels employed in work. Eustathius is of the opinion that it alludes to the damsels, and expresses

the quick and continued motion of their hands: I have followed this interpretation, and think that Homer intended to illustrate that quick and intermingled motion, by comparing them to the branches of a poplar agitated by winds, all at once in motion, some bending this, some that way. The other interpretations are more forced, and less intelligible.

V. 107. [*Of the original.*]

Καίρσεων δ' ὀθοίεων ἀπολείβεσθαι ὑγρὸν ἐλαίον.]

This passage is not without difficulty: some of the ancients understood it to signify the thickness and closeness of the texture, which was so compactly wrought that oil could not penetrate it: others thought it expressed the smoothness and softness of it, as if oil seemed to flow from it; or lastly, that it shone with such a glossy colour as looked like oil. Dacier renders the verse according to the opinion first recited:

'So close the work, that oil diffus'd in vain,
Glides off innoxious and without a stain.'

Any of these interpretations make the passage intelligible (though I think the description does better without it). It is left to the judgment of the reader which to prefer; they are all to be found in Eustathius.

V. 138. . . . *works of female skill their women's pride.*] We may gather from what Homer here relates concerning the skill of these Phæacian damsels, that they were famed for these works of curiosity: the Corcyrians were much given to traffick, and perhaps they might bring slaves from the Sidonians, who instructed them in these manufactures. DACIER.

V. 161. *Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun.*] To understand this passage aright, it is necessary to know the manner of ordering the vintage amongst the Greeks. First, they carried all the grapes they gathered into a house for a season; afterwards they exposed them ten days to the sun, and let them lie abroad as many nights in the freshness of the air; then they kept them five days in cool shades, and on the sixth they trod them, and

put the wine into vessels. This we learn from Hesiod: *εἰς ὧν*, v. 229.

..... Πανίης ἀποδρεπε οἰκαδὲ βοτρυς
 Δεῖξαι δ' ἡλίῳ δέκα τ' ἡμάλα καὶ δέκα ἡκίλας
 Πέντε δὲ συσκιάσαι, ἐκίῳ δ' εἰς σῖγαν ἀφυσσαι
 Δώρα Διωνυσῆι πολλὰ ληθεῖσθαι.....

Homer distinguishes the whole into three orders: first, the grapes that have already been exposed to the sun are trod; the second order is of the grapes that are exposed, while the others are treading; and the third, of those that are ripe to be gathered, while the others are thus ordering. Homer himself thus explains it, by saying, that while some vines were loaded with black and mature grapes, others were green, or but just turning to blackness. Homer undoubtedly founds this poetical relation upon observing some vines that bore fruit thrice annually. Pliny affirms this to be true, lib. xvi. cap. 27. 'Vites quidem et tri-feræ sunt, quas ob id insanas vocant, quoniam in iis aliæ, maturescunt, aliæ turgescunt, aliæ florent.' DACIER.

V. 184. *Prepar'd for rest, and off'ring to the god
 Who bears the virtue of the sleepy red.]*

I have already explained from Athenæus this custom of offering to Mercury at the conclusion of entertainments: he was thought by the ancients to preside over sleep: 'Dat somnos adimitque,' according to Horace, as Dacier observes. In following ages this practice was altered, and they offered not to Mercury, but to Jove the perfecter, or to *Ζεὺς τελεῖ*.

V. 200. *A wretched exile to his country send.]* Ulysses here speaks very concisely: and he may seem to break abruptly into the subject of his petition, without letting the audience either into the knowledge of his condition or person. Was this a proper method to prevail over an assembly of strangers? But his gesture spoke for him, he threw himself into the posture of a suppliant, and the persons of all suppliants were esteemed to be sacred: he declared himself to be a man in calamity, and reserves his story to be told more at large, when the surprise of the Phæacians at the sudden appearance of a stranger was over; this conciseness

therefore is not blameable, but rather an instance of Homer's judgment, who knows when to be short, and when to be copious.

V. 207. *And humbled in the ashes took his place.*] This was the custom of suppliants: they betook themselves to the hearth as sacred, and a place of refuge. It was particularly in the protection of Vesta: thus Tully, lib. ii. de Naturâ Deorum; 'Nomen Vestæ sumptum est a Græcis, ea est enim quæ illis *sortis* dicitur, jusque ejus ad aras, et focos pertinet.' Apollonius likewise, as Spondanus observes, takes notice of this custom of suppliants:

Τῷ δ' ἀνῶ, καὶ ἀναυδοί, ἐφ' ἐστὶν αἰζάνῃς
ἰζάνον, ἥτε δίκῃ λυγροῖς κητησὶ τετυγῆται.

That is, they betook themselves to the hearth, and there sat mute, which is the custom of all unhappy suppliants. If it was a custom, as Apollonius observes, to sit mute, this gives another reason why Ulysses used but few words in his supplication: he had greatly outraged a practice that was established as sacred amongst the Greeks, and had not acted in the character of a suppliant, if he had launched out into a long oration.

This was the most sure and effectual way of supplication; thus, when Themistocles fled to Admetus king of the Molossians, he placed himself before the hearth, and was received, though that king had formerly vowed his destruction. Plutarch indeed calls it an unusual way of supplication; but that proceeded from his carrying a child in his arms to move the greater compassion, not from his throwing himself into the protection of the household gods.

V. 240. the due libation pay
To Jove]

We have already seen that the whole assembly was about to pour libations to Mercury; whence is it then that they now offer to Jupiter? Eustathius observes, it was because of the arrival of this stranger, and Jupiter presides over all strangers, and is frequently stiled Ζεὺς ξένος and Ζεὺς ἐστιάχης.

V. 277. *So near approach we their celestial kind, &c.*] There

is some intricacy in this passage, and much labour has been used to explain it. Some would have it to imply, that 'we are as nearly allied to the gods, as the Cyclops and giants, who are descended from them; and if the gods frequently appear to these giants who defy them, how much more may it be expected by the Phæacians to enjoy that favour, who reverence and adore them?' Eustathius explains it after another method: Alcinous had conceived a fixed hatred against the race of the Cyclops, who had expelled the Phæacians from their country, and forced them to seek a new habitation; he here expresses that hatred, and says, that the Phæacians resemble the gods as much in goodness, as the Cyclops and giants one the other in impiety: he illustrates it, by shewing that the expression has the same import as if we should say that Socrates comes as near to Plato in virtue, as Anytus and Melitus to one another in wickedness; and indeed the construction will be easy, by understanding *Ἀλληγοίς* in the second verse.

..... Σφισιν εἰγυθεν εἶμην,
Ὡσπερ κυκλωπες τε καὶ ὠγρὶα φυλὰ μέγαλ' ἴων.

Subaudi, εἰγυθεν ἀλληλοῖς εἰσιν.

I have already spoken of the presence of the gods at the sacrifices, in a former note upon the *Odyssey*: this frequent intercourse of the gods was agreeable to the theology of the ancients; but why then is Alcinous surprised at the appearance of Ulysses, whom he looks upon as a god, if such favours were frequent? Spondanus replies, that it is the unusualness of the time, not the appearance, that surprises Alcinous; the gods appeared either at their sacrifices, or in their journeys, and therefore he looks upon this visit as a thing extraordinary.

V. 305. *That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death, &c.* It is very necessary to recall frequently to the reader's mind the desire Ulysses has to reach his own country, and to shew that he is absent not by choice, but necessity; all the disorders in his kingdoms happen by reason of his absence: it is therefore necessary to set the desire of his return in the strongest point of light, that he may not seem accessory to those disorders, by being absent

when it was in his power to return. It is observable that Ulysses does not here make any mention of Penelope, whom he scarce ever omits in other places, as one of the chief inducements to wish for his country; the reason of his silence, says Eustathius, is, because he is unwilling to abate the favour of Alcinous, by a discovery that would shew it was impossible for him to marry his daughter; such a discovery might make the king proceed more coolly towards his transportation; whereas it would afterwards be less dangerous, when he has had an opportunity fully to engage him in his favour.

V. 326. *Yet what you ask, attend*] Homer here gives a summary of the subject of the two preceding books: this recapitulation cannot indeed be avoided, because it is necessary to let Alcinous into his story, and this cannot be done without a repetition; but generally all repetitions are tedious: the reader is offended when that is related which he knows already: he receives no new instruction to entertain his judgment, nor any new descriptions to excite his curiosity, and by these means the very soul of poetry is extinguished, and it becomes unspirited and lifeless. When therefore repetitions are absolutely necessary, they ought always to be short; and I may appeal to the reader, if he is not tired with many in Homer, especially when made in the very same words? Here indeed Ulysses tells his story but in part; the queen asked him who he was, but he passes over this without any reply, and reserves the greatest part of his story to a time of more leisure, that he may discover himself to a better advantage before the whole peerage of the Phæacians. I do not always condemn even the verbal repetitions of Homer; sometimes, as in embassies, they may be necessary, because every word is stamped with authority, and perhaps they might be customary in Homer's times; if they were not, he had too fruitful an invention not to have varied his thoughts and expressions. Bossu observes, that with respect to repetitions, Virgil is more exact than Homer; for instance, in the first book of the *Æneis*, when Æneas is repeating his sufferings to Venus, she interrupts him to give him comfort:

‘ Nec plura querentem

Passa Venus, medio sic interfata dolore est.’

And in the third book, where good manners obliged this hero to relate his story at the request of Andromache, the poet prevents it by introducing Helenus, who hinders the repetition.

V. 391. *She bade me follow*

But fear and rev'rence, &c.]

This is directly contrary to what is before asserted in the preceding book, where Nausicaa forbids Ulysses to attend her, to avoid suspicion and slander. Is not Ulysses then guilty of falsehood, and is not falsehood beneath the character of a hero? Eustathius confesses that Ulysses is guilty, *φανερῶς ψευδῆσαι*; and he adds, that a wise man may do sometimes opportunely: *Οτις εν καιρῳ εν κατῳ σοφος*. I fear this concession of the bishop's would not pass for good casuistry in these ages. Spondanus is of the same opinion as Eustathius; 'Vir prudens certo loco et tempore mendaciis officiosissimis uti novit.' Dacier confesses that he somewhat disguises the truth. It will be difficult to vindicate Ulysses from the imputation, if the notions of truth and falsehood were so strict in former, as in these ages: but we must not measure by this standard: it is certain that anciently lying was reckoned no crime by a whole nation; and it still bears a dispute, 'An omne falsi-loquium sit mendacium?' Some casuists allow of the 'officiosum mendacium,' and such is this of Ulysses, entirely complimentary and officious.

V. 400. *Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son.]* The ancients observe, that Alcinous very artfully inserts this proposition to Ulysses, to prove his veracity. If he had embraced it without hesitation, he would have concluded him an impostor; for it is not conceivable that he should reject all the temptation to marriage made him by Calypso a goddess, and yet immediately embrace this offer of Alcinous to marry his daughter. But if we take the passage in another sense, and believe that Alcinous spoke sincerely without any secret suspicions, yet his conduct is justifiable. It has, I confess, appeared shocking, that Alcinous, a king, should at the very first interview offer his daughter to a stranger, who might be a vagrant and impostor: but examples are frequent in antiquity of marriages thus concluded between

strangers, and with as little hesitation: thus Bellerophon, Tydeus, and Polinyces were married. Great personages regarded not riches, but were only solicitous to procure worthy husbands for their daughters, and birth and virtue were the best recommendations.

It is observable that in the original there is a chasm, an infinitive mood without any thing to govern it; we must therefore supply the word *εθαλει* to make it right construction. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 411. *Far as Eubæa though thy country lay.*] Eubæa, as Eustathius observes, is really far distant from Corcyra, ^{country} of the Phæacians: but Alcinous still makes it more distant, by placing it in another part of the world, and describing it as one of the Fortunate islands: for in the fourth book, Rhadamanthus is said to inhabit the Elysian fields. Alcinous therefore endeavours to have it believed that his isle is near those fields, by asserting that Rhadamanthus made use of Phæacian vessels in his voyage to Tityus. Eustathius further adds, that Rhadamanthus was a prince of great justice, and Tityus a person of great impiety, and that he made this voyage to bring him over to more virtuous dispositions.

V. 415. *This land, from whence their morning course begun,
Saw them returning with the setting sun.*]

If Homer had given the true situation of Corcyra as it really lies opposite to Epirus, yet the hyperbole of sailing thence to Eubæa and returning in the same day, had been utterly an impossibility; for in sailing thither, they must pass the Ionian and Icarian seas, and double the Peloponnesus. But the fiction is yet more extravagant, by the poet's placing it still more distant near the Fortunate islands. But what is impossible for vessels to effect, that are as swift as birds, and can sail with the rapidity of a thought? EUSTATHIUS.

But then is the poet justifiable for relating such incredible amplifications? It may be answered, if he had put these extravagancies into the mouth of Ulysses, he had been unpardonable, but they suit well with the character of Alcinous: they yet



Ulysses into his disposition, and he appears to be ignorant, credulous, and ostentatious. This was necessary, that Ulysses might know how to adapt himself to his humour, and engage his assistance; and this he actually brings about by raising his wonder and esteem by stories, that could not fail to please such an ignorant and credulous person as Alcinous.

Dacier adds, that the Phæacians were so puffed up with their constant felicity and the protection of the gods, that they thought nothing impossible; upon this opinion all these hyperboles are founded: and this agrees too well with human nature; the more happy they are, the more high and extravagantly they talk, and are too apt to entertain themselves with wild chimeras, which have no existence but in the imagination.

The moral then to these fables of Alcinous is, that a constant series of happiness intoxicates the mind, and that moderation is often learned in the school of adversity.

V. 423. *The prayer of Ulysses.*] It is observable, that Ulysses makes no reply directly to the obliging proposition which the king made concerning his daughter. A refusal might have been disadvantageous to his present circumstances, yet an answer is implied in this prayer, which shews the impatience he has to return to his country, and the gratitude he feels for his promises to effect it: and consequently it discovers that he has no intentions of settling with his daughter amongst the Phæacians. DACIER.

V. 437, 438. *The last lines.*] It may seem somewhat extraordinary that Alcinous and his queen, who have been described as patterns of conjugal happiness should sleep in distinct beds. Jupiter and Juno, as Dacier observes from the first of the Iliad, have the same bed. Perhaps the poet designed to shew the luxury and false delicacy of those too happy Phæacians, who lived in such softness that they shunned every thing that might prove troublesome or incommodious.

This book takes up no longer time than the evening of the thirty-second day.